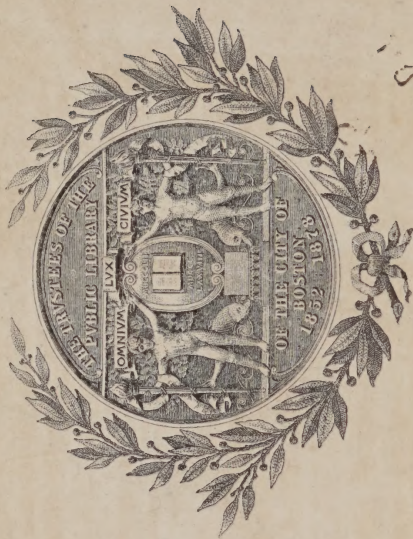


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SPRING-TIDE;

OR,

THE ANGLER AND HIS FRIENDS.







The May-Flower

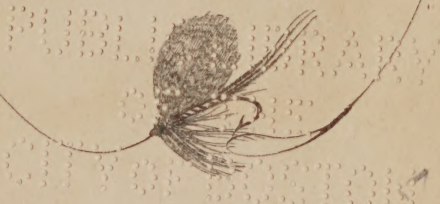
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SOUTH END

4278

SPRING-TIDE;
OR,
THE ANGLER AND HIS FRIENDS.

BY
JOHN YONGE AKERMAN.

Lord, who would live turmoiled in the court,
And may enjoy such quiet walks as these?
SHAKESPEARE, *K. Henry VI.*



493

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

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WABILL DUBIN
227 70
WABILL DUBIN

LONDON:

Printed by S. & J. BENTLEY and HENRY FLEV,
Bangor House, Shoe Lane.

PREFACE DEDICATORY.

7/21

42/8

TO

JOHN HUGHES, ESQUIRE,

OF

DONNINGTON PRIORY,

IN THE COUNTY OF BERKS.

MY DEAR SIR,

To you, as a kind friend whose streams I have often fished, and of whose hospitality I have as often partaken,—to you, as the preserver and restorer of “Owld Grumbleton,” I have ventured to inscribe this little volume.

Other reasons, however, induce me to make free with your name. Your fondness for the remains of that dialect which I have here incidentally attempted to vindicate and illustrate, is well known,—a

fondness inseparable from attachment to the homely race by whom it is still used.

My hints on Fly-fishing contain, I fear, little that is not already known to the practical Angler, and may only serve as a guide to those who may be tempted to pursue one of the most delightful of field-sports, which, of old time, the Ecclesiastical Canons did not deny even to the Clergy.

Some of our countrymen may, perhaps, derive half an hour's amusement from those portions of the dialogue in which I have attempted to defend from the charge of utter vulgarity, the language of the rustic population of the Southern and Western parts of England. That among an unlettered race there should be much in their speech which may be denominated vulgar, is unquestionably true; but there are also a great number of words and phrases which

are as certainly the remains of an old tongue once used in England even by the educated. This dialect has greatly changed, and is still changing, and we may both live to find that it is destined to undergo a still further mutation.

It appears from Higden, whose Chronicle was written in the 14th century, that in his days the people of the West of England could understand the language of their countrymen in the Eastern parts of the Island, but that the men of the South actually could not understand those of the North. He instances especially the dialect of Yorkshire, which he describes as grating and uncouth in the extreme.* Caxton, in his edition of Trevisa's "Polychronicon" modernized the language and adapted it to his time:—"Therefore I, William Caxton, a symple person, have

* Tota lingua Northumbrorum, maxime in Eboraco, ita stridet incondita.—*Lib. i.*

endeavoured me to write first over all the said book of ‘Polychronicon,’ and somewhat have changed the rude and old English, that is to wit, certain words which in these days be neither used nor understandon.”

In 1654, a little less than 200 years later, when Evelyn visited Beverley in Yorkshire, he was shown over the church by a woman who spoke the language of Queen Mary’s days.* This shows that our language was continually changing as civilization advanced, and that even in the provinces, people, in towns and cities at least, had begun to discard their ancient dialect, and adopt a mode of speech founded on a more recent model. “*These*,” these Waller alludes:—

But who can hope his lines should long
Last, in a daily changing tongue?

It is my belief, that the evidence of

* Diary, sub anno 1654.

provincialisms in our old MSS. are not so plain as some writers would lead us to suppose. It seems rather, that most of the works which have been preserved were written with a view to their being generally comprehensible to Englishmen, and not in the dialects of particular districts. Robert of Gloster is a singular exception: we have nothing so decidedly characteristic of the language of the West of England, and this so closely resembles the speech of the Berkshire, Wiltshire, and Gloucestershire peasant of our day, that if read to him carefully, it would be far from unintelligible.

It is well known to those who have made our provincialisms their study, that a certain dialect and its modifications prevails in a certain division of England, the geographical limits of which may thus be sketched:—East and West, from Dover to the Land's End, and North and South

from the Warwickshire Avon to the Isle of Wight. In all the counties included within these limits we have varieties, it is true, but varieties of one dialect, and in that dialect may be traced innumerable relics of the language of our Saxon forefathers. Nor is it in words alone, many of which have become obsolete among the educated, that we find traces of an older language. The pronunciation of many yet recognised is so clearly that of the original tongue, that we need cite but two examples; namely, *Dew*, pronounced *Deaw*, and *Few*, pronounced *Feaw*. In the South and West of England, either of these words may be taken as the *Shiboleth* of the rural population; but it is not so with *Brad amang*, and *ael*, pure Saxon, still found, not only in the South and West, but also on the Northern borders of England.

It is obvious that in many districts of

England the language has been so much changed by the march of civilization, as to be no longer characterised by the most marked provincialisms; while, on the other hand, in many villages of the Western counties, the language has not very materially varied for centuries past. We cannot doubt but that the speeches which Shakspeare puts into the mouth of Edgar, when personating Mad Tom, are a sample of the language of the Warwickshire clown of his day. One sentence is especially worthy of notice: "Chill pick your teeth, Zir" (*Lear*, Act iv.). Now this form of speech is entirely obsolete in Warwickshire at the present day, while "chill" and "cham" ("I will" and "I am") are still used in parts of Somersetshire; and it is only a few weeks since that a Kentish gentleman, settled at Henley-in-Arden, found that none of his neighbours knew what a "keeler" was (a shallow vessel used

in brewing), although their great countryman's line,

“While greasy Joan doth kele the pot,”

was, of course, so familiar to all of them !

But it is not my purpose to discuss at length the changes to which our tongue has yielded, nor to weary you with elaborate attempts at philological illustration ; nor need I desire to enlist your sympathy for a too much neglected and too often despised race. We know well that though the rustic has sometimes a woodbine at his cottage-door, he has more frequently penury and want, and disease within ; and that though, unlike the artisan, he at certain seasons of the year may trudge to his labour with the lark above his head, he at others returns hungry, and cold, and weary, to a cheerless home where food and fuel are scanty.

Should the day happily arrive when the condition of the agricultural labourer may

be permanently improved, none will rejoice more heartily than the Angler, whose pursuit leads him to the retired nooks and corners of our birth-land, and affords him so many opportunities of studying the habits and feelings of a race to whom England is so much indebted.

Believe me, my dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend

and fellow-countryman,

J. Y. AKERMAN.

LONDON,
St. Valentine's Day, 1850.

It is good in discourse, and speech of conversation, to vary and intermingle speech of the present occasion with arguments, tales with reasons, asking of questions with telling of opinions, and *jest with earnest*: for it is a dull thing to tire, and as we say now, to jade a thing too far.

BACON, *Of Discourse*.

L'accent du pays où l'on est né, demeure dans l'esprit et dans le cœur comme dans le langage.

ROCHEFOUCAULT.

Vita rustica sine dubitatione, proxima et quasi consanguinea sapientiæ.

COLUMELLA.

10/25/20

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M. L. A.

S. E.

SOUTH END

FIRST DAY.

Cunctas veris opes et picta rosaria gemmis
Laniger in calathis, aspice, Maius habet,
Mensis Atlantigenæ dictus cognomine Maiæ,
Quem merito multum diligit Uranic.

AUSONIUS.

Again the merry month of May
Has made our hills and valleys gay ;
The birds rejoice in leafy bowers,
The bees hum round the breathing flowers ;
Blythe Morning lifts his rosy eye,
And Evening's tears are tears of joy.

BURNS.

SPRING-TIDE.

FIRST DAY.

SENEX, JULIAN.

Senex. THIS way: our road lies along this path and over yonder stile, on the other side of which is the river. What a morning for the Angler! The sun has hidden himself, and those light clouds bode no rain, while the gentle south wind stirs the leaflets and curls the surface of the water.

A day with not too bright a beam ;
A warm but not too scorching sun ;
A southern gale to curl the stream,
And, Master, half our work is done.

O the merry month of May ! how often
have I sighed for these scenes of my early


childhood, while pent up in chambers in London. Truly must a man have experienced such durance to render him fit to enjoy the country as he ought.

Julian. There is some truth in that remark. Often, when looking on a beautiful prospect, I have noticed that my country companion did not participate in my raptures. Yet even scenes like these are cheerless in foul weather: we cannot have perpetual May.

S. God forbid that we should, for then we should lose the benefit of contrast. Yet I am not one of those who would forsake the country even in foul weather. No, not

When the rotten woodland drips,
And the leaf is stamp'd in clay.

It has its charms for me in all seasons.
What sight more beautiful than hedge-rows and coppices glittering in the sun's rays on a frosty morning! Flocks of wild



fowl, no longer secure in their sedgy retreats, are scouring the country in all directions; small birds, tamed by hunger, draw near your dwelling, and robin in his scarlet pourpoint, perched on the window-sill, begs a crumb from your trencher.

J. Excellent! You should write a panegyric on Dan Winter, and recite it to the owls who haunt the tall elms near the house. One of these creatures kept me awake the whole night when I last visited you. Its hooting was incessant.

S. Not a word, as you love me, against the "anchorite of birds." I have an especial veneration for such of the feathered race as haunt old buildings, and delight in watching the jackdaw in church-towers, though he differs much from my solemn friend the owl. Just observe them about the turrets of the old minster in a cathedral town. Garrulous gray-pates vie with the bipeds below them. They chatter, quarrel,

fall out, and cuff it at times, like the lords of the creation: doubtless like them, too, they prate of politics and of a pedigree, but they cling with filial fondness to the old fane, however fierce the storm may howl around it. But of all birds “commend me to the owl.”

J. Do you recollect Drayton’s picture of your favourite?—

“ ’Twas near the caves and shelter of a stack,
Set to support it at a beech’s back,
In a stubb’d tree with ivy overgrown,
On which the sun had scarcely ever shone,
A broad-faced creature, hanging of the wing,
’ Was set to sleep while every bird did sing.”

S. Ay, ay: he who wrote the lines—

“ Can grave and formal pass for wise,
When we the solemn owl despise ? ”

was a Cockney, and knew nothing of the bird. Minerva did not despise him when she adopted him for her crest, and thousands of Attic drachmas, still existing, attest that the Athenians held him in veneration as I

do. Other birds may be loud at prime and complin, but the owl's is the midnight service. Apart from the superstitious feeling from which some of the best informed of us are scarcely free, there is something inexpressibly solemn in the note of the bird of night. Have you ever, when threading a wild wood, come upon some ivy-sheltered nook protected from the blaze of the noon-tide sun, and seen the owl perched in his solitary retreat so near you that you might strike him down with your staff? I have, when a boy, often encountered him in that way, and felt awed at the presence of the majestic bird. How he loves the mouldering pile which piety raised and fanaticism shattered from roof-tree to crypt! His lineage could tell of the times when rude and impious hands battered and defaced corbel and mullion, and delicate tracery, wrought by the cunningest craftsmen in Christendom. Here he abides in dignified solitude, from

which he emerges only when the world is asleep.

J. Yes, all except the poacher and the night-prowler. And here I am disposed to say a word in behalf of your favourite. I verily believe he assists in imparting awe and solemnity to darkness, and this has a salutary effect upon the morals of your village population. When once your chaw-bacon becomes habituated to late hours and night-walking, he is, if young, easily persuaded to become poacher, and so on from bad to worse until the hulks or the gallows closes the scene.

S. True every word of it, and therefore long let that noble bird be honoured. Long may he find a refuge in the retreat he loves ! “The illuminated rites, the swelling organ, the monkish magnificence of processions have passed away ; theirs was but a transient possession, but your owl shall be mitred abbot to the end of time.”

J. Your friend, however, excites no veneration among the birds of the air, who thrash him soundly when they catch him abroad. “Mine heritage,” says the prophet, “is unto me as a speckled bird;—the birds round about are against her.”

S. I have often thought of that passage as I have seen the owl reeling and blundering through the air at daylight, assailed by small birds of all sizes, even including the titmouse and the wren. But these little creatures sometimes attack the cuckoo and the hawk as their common enemy in the same manner, and occasionally suffer for their temerity from the talons of the latter. Such allusions in Holy Writ remind me that a few years ago some witling talked of writing a book to show the acquaintance of the inspired writers of the Old Testament with natural history, as if Nature’s huge volume did not lie before

them in those ancient days when books were few and precious.

J. Wonderful discovery ! I believe there is an advertisement not long since issued, announcing a work illustrating Shakspeare's knowledge of natural history !

S. A veritable *mare's nest* !—but here's the river, and yonder comes my ally, Simon Paradice, a true specimen of the “Chawbacon” — shrewd, but honest, and grateful for little kindnesses.

J. I confess I have little sympathy with these clods. There is in them a good deal of low cunning under the mask of simplicity, and their manners are intolerably boorish.

S. Hold there ! I cannot bear to hear my smock-frocked friends and neighbours so vilified, “nor shall you do mine ear that violence.” I have all my life loved these simple people whom you abuse. Coarse, and even brutal, many of them

certainly are, but take what class you will, I believe you will find within it a larger number more vicious, and with infinitely less excuse for bad living. To me there is something affecting in the hard and simple lives of these people, who, when well-disposed, present better examples of christian patience and resignation than may be found even among the educated. If you knew them as well I do, you would confess that the agricultural labourer is a long-suffering and enduring creature—rude and unpolished, but often honest and submissive to his superiors, to a degree that you will look for in vain among the half-educated and often half-infidel mechanic. I can never forget that our Great Master and Teacher chose for his companions on earth men of the simplest habits and humblest walk of life; and often as I have looked upon the cluster of white frocks in the aisle of our village church, and watched

the serious up-turned weather-beaten countenances of the group—often, I say, have I, while contemplating this sight, prayed for the simple faith of those poor clowns.

J. Well, perhaps if I had lived longer among them, as you have, I should be more reconciled to their habits; but their dialect puzzles me sorely—it is English run mad!

S. There, again, let me venture to set you right. It is no jargon, as many have supposed; on the contrary, it more resembles the language of the great Alfred—you stare, but it is true—than that I am now using; and this I hope to show you before we part. Well, Simon [*Simon comes forward*] are we to have any sport to-day?

Simon [*making his obeisance*]. I haups zo, zur; there 's a girt un or two, about dree pound a piece, down by them elmin trees yander.

J. [*aside*]. A sample of the language of Alfred the Great ! O Gemini !

S. Give me my rod, and help this gentleman to put together his.

Simon. Eez, zur.

S. [*searching his pockets*]. “Eh,” as the great Christopher says,—“not in our coat, not in our breeches, not in our hat !”—run up to the house, Simon, and fetch me my fly-book ; you ’ll find it on the hall table [*exit Simon at the pace of a hunted hare*]. Now then let me tell you that one of the two last words uttered by that fellow was more like the language of Alfred, and Beda, and Ælfric, than our own.

J. Indeed ! Pray let me hear—which of them ?

S. Why that which sounds to moderns the most rustic of any—the word “Eez,” which is most palpably nothing more than the Anglo-Saxon *gese*, the *g* being perhaps

soft, or, as the learned suppose, having been softened like *y* under the Norman rule. In this way “geclepid” became yclepid, a form in which it is found in our literature up to a comparatively recent period.

J. If you run on at this rate, you ’ll make a proselyte of me for a certainty. Here comes our henchman. This is a sweet spot, which old Walton himself would have revelled in. You remember Withers’ lines :—

“ Two pretty rills do meet, and meeting, make
Within one valley a large silver lake,
About whose banks the fertile mountains stood
In ages passed, bravely crown’d with wood,
Which lending cold sweet shadows, gave it grace
To be accounted Cynthia’s bathing-place.”

S. Yes, Withers viewed everything with a poet’s eye, and rightly considered a running stream indispensable to the perfect beauty of a landscape. Witness another passage in the same poem :—

“ For what offence this place was scanted so
Of springing waters, no record doth show ;
Nor have they old tradition left that tells ;
But till this day at fifty-fathom wells
The shepherds drink.”

Without running streams a country loses half its charms. The ancients considered them the proper ornaments of sylvan beauty ; hence Maximus Tyrius tells us the mountains were sacred to Jupiter, but the valleys to Diana. And now let us try our skill against one of the denizens of this pretty water.

J. What's your fly ?

S. Try a hackle and a “ yellow dun.” Like most persons who cast a fly, you have, I suppose, your crotchets, and would not for the world put two of the same sort on at the same time, though I'll venture an even bet that the “ bob-fly” is taken four times out of five in preference to the “ stretcher.” This you may soon test by ringing the changes.

J. I am, as you know, but a novice in fly-fishing, so I shall implicitly follow your advice, which is a very fair answer to some of the quackeries on Angling. "Put on a palmer or hackle," says one oracle, "and another fly supposed to be in season, and when you have taken a fish, open his belly and see which he has been feeding on,—then use a fly of the same colour."

S. I have heard the same stuff gravely enunciated by people who never once paused to consider its utter absurdity, and who set me down as a Johnny-raw in the science, when I ventured to remark that I would fish any river with three palmers of my own choosing.

J. There must, however, be very different fishing in different rivers, some requiring more dexterity than others. The Irish and Scotch are good anglers, I believe.

S. Undoubtedly; but some of them

would find it difficult to fish such streams as these. In sharp running water you must strike the moment you feel your fish, or he is gone; but where the current runs sluggishly, it is necessary to give him time, or you lose him to a certainty. Much of the angler's success, however, depends on his acquaintance with the water, and the whereabouts of the fish. But, come, let me see you throw for a trout. I think you will find one lying just to the left of that tuft of weeds. Can you reach him?

J. I'll try. There!

S. You moved him. Wait a moment. He seems inclined, but let him recover himself. Wind up a foot of your line, and, if he takes your fly, be sure you do not let him plunge into the weeds. Now try again. Well done!—you have him. Walk down stream with him, and wind up as fast as you can. He's a fine

fish, and shows excellent sport. Be ready, Simon. Let him feel the play of your rod, but do not pull him too hard. So ! that was well done !

J. He's evidently averse to any acquaintance with the fool at the other end, and declines a meeting.

S. His struggles are vain. See, — he reels, and shows his golden side ! It's all over with him. Give me the landing-net, Simon. Now lead him to the bank. No — *non placet* — another struggle for life or death, but in vain. Bring him in. There, sir, he's yours, — a well-fed fish, and a good pound and a half.

J. Faith ! this is worth all the bottom-fishing in the world !

S. Ay, truly, and your quarry is more elegant. Your fly-fisher may take to trolling when trout-fishing is over, but he looks impatiently for the return of Spring. Some skill is needed, too, in playing a fish

with light tackle such as this, but you may tow a jackass down stream with jack-tackle; or, as the "Young Angler's Instructor" acutely observes, "you can only lose him by not giving him time."

J. A friend of mine never fishes with more than one fly at a time. What think you of the practice? This fish, you see, took my bob-fly, and in his floundering and plunging I feared the other would become entangled.

S. Mr. Penn, who, in his "Maxims and Hints," has given us some of the best instructions on trout-fishing, has a remark on the subject which is a good answer to all that has been said. "The learned," says he, "are much divided in opinion as to the propriety of whipping with two flies or with one. I am humbly of opinion that your chance of hooking fish is much increased by your using two flies, but I think that by only using one you increase

your chance of landing the fish." There can be no doubt of this, and I have illustrated it myself occasionally, having caught with one fly a fine fish, and with the other a most obdurate weed or a bramble, which has either broken my tackle or suffered the fish to shake himself loose. Notwithstanding this, I prefer using two flies, because I think the "bob," as you draw your line across the stream, more frequently invites the attention of the fish; moreover, it is generally taken at the end of a straight line, and therefore the trout is more likely to hook himself. Come, try again.

J. There's a fish rising a few yards lower down. I'll throw for him. I have him! quick!—the landing-net.

S. You need not trouble yourself: your friend is small, and not fit for the creel.

J. I thought him at first a fine fish.

He took the fly greedily, and made a great fuss.

S. Just so,—which is almost a certain sign of his extreme youth. You did not find your first fish do so: he scarcely showed himself at the onset. I love to feel my rod bend with the sudden sullen downward plunge of a trout, for that generally assures me that my fish is of a fair size, while a small one dashes at the prize as a spoilt child snatches the apple you offer him. I have sometimes lost a very heavy fish, which has gone down in this sullen manner, without showing himself at all, and after a few minutes succeeded in getting clear off. Salmon will sometimes serve you so, and you have no resource left but to pelt them up.

J. I like the look of your rod better than my own: give me leave to exchange with you for a short time.

S. Yours is somewhat too pliant for my

hand, but it is a well-made rod, and as fine as brass rings and varnish can make it. This smartness dazzles the eyes of our clowns, who sometimes say the rods are “a nashun zite too vine var the vish,”—don’t they, Simon?

Simon. Eez, zur, um do. Vishes be martal timersome, and dwont like anything as glisters too much. Jack Ockell wud zometimes be out early in the marnin, and just as a’d get to the river zide, up’d come owld Varmer Smith, wi’ his white smock vrock on, and put Jack in a girt pelt, coz ’ud stand clost by the zide an hin to watch un. “Od drattle’t!” Jack u’d cry, “if you be gwain’ to stand there, I med as well drow my hat at um, that’s ael!” and then the varmer’d gwo away laughin, and zay Jack was a curious wos-bird to be zhure!

S.—[*Aside to J.*] My friend, you see, is coming out; and, if you can bear with

him, you will hear some queer stories presently.

J. To be sure I will; but I find some difficulty in understanding him.

S. I 'll supply the gloss.

J. Thank you: I am quite ready for my lessons in the language of Alfred and Beda.—There's a fish rising under that bank. Pshaw!—I cannot reach him. I cannot cast so far by a full yard.

S. Let me try. There!—I have him.

J. Phew! what a length of line! and what a fine fish! He fights nobly, but you have him well in hand.

S. I hold with Mr. Penn there, who says your success will often depend greatly upon the manner in which you first commence your acquaintance with a fish, which, if you give him time to put his helm up, may cause you much trouble. Now, Simon, out with him. Humph!—about two pounds.

J. A beautiful fish. I wish I could cast a line with your skill.

S. You will soon do that. I am a poor hand, compared with many whom I have met ; but the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong ; and a habit of observation as to the haunts of fish will often compensate for some want of skill. Still, to be able to cast a long and light line to a great distance, is an unquestionable advantage. It is amusing to see a green fisherman whipping away at a fish that lies just out of his reach, till by and by a rustic-looking personage appears by his side, bearing a rod whose staff is like a weaver's beam, and, with a "I thenks *I* can put it auver hin," *swash* goes the aforesaid staff, out goes the line some twenty-five yards or so, and in a twinkling a big trout is plunging at the end of it.

J. I am surprised to find so many fish

here in a stream so much exposed. I suppose Simon helps to watch it.

Simon. Eez, zur, I helps a bit now and then. Us tuk oon chap laast zummer, and a purty nigh drownded oon on us, but us got un out at laast, and tuk un in to the public, when a axed lave to dry's zelf, and tuk ael's duds off; but I'll be whipped if a didn't bowlt out o' winder as naked as a worm, and tuk acress the vields, and got right awoy, a poaching wosbird!

S. They can do less harm here than in smaller and shallower streams, except by poisoning.

Simon. Ye yeard, I s'pwose, how Tom Ockell pwizined Squire Dun's vish, zur.


S. No; how was that?


Simon. Whoy, a was never quite clane in ael's life; zo one vine night laast midsummer, a perswaded hizzelf to get into the Bruk, and the next marnin,—to be zhure!

—there *was* a vine caddle ! A 'd pwized ael the vish, a was so curnashun dirty !

J. There is a choice epithet which your friend has used more than once, and which I don't remember meeting with before. Pray what does he mean by a *wosbird* ?

S. It has been supposed by many to be a term synonymous with *bastard*, but I am half inclined to the opinion of a friend, who suggests that the first syllable is composed of the Anglo-Saxon “wo,” *wrong*, *evil*, *misfortune*, or *mischief*: a “wosbird” is therefore equivalent to a *bird of evil*, or *bird of mischief*, and in this sense it is applied by those who use it. I don't believe it is used at all in the north of England, and it may therefore be considered a remnant of the West Saxon dialect, to which, like many other words, it appears to be peculiar; while some are common among the rural population throughout the country, from the Isle of Wight to the Tyne.

Thus the pure Anglo-Saxon “ael,” for *all*, is still found from north to south; but in the counties south of the Avon it is less frequent, and only heard among those who adhere to and use the “owld taak,” as they term it. But if you encourage me in these etymological reveries, you’ll lose some fine fish, and this is a morning which the angler ought not to neglect. Let us go and look after Simon’s “two or dree girt uns down yander.”  A good trout generally lies under the roots of that polard-willow: I took one there last season which weighed nearly four pounds, and I warrant you another is, by this time, waiting his turn, though I cannot promise that he will be as big or as well fed.

J. I shall be content with one of half that weight. 

S. I remember, some years since, when near this spot, running to the rescue of an elderly gentleman, who had hooked and

was playing a fine trout, when suddenly the fish's guardian angel appeared in the shape of a wasp, which careered at the nose of piscator so menacingly, that, but for my timely assistance, the veteran angler would have come off second best.—[*Excunt.*

SECOND DAY.

Go, let the diving Negro seek
For gems hid in some forlorn creek :
 We all pearls scorn,
 Save what the dewy morn
Congeals upon each little spire of grass,
Which careless shepherds beat down as they pass ;
 And gold ne'er here appears,
 Save what the yellow Ceres bears.

SIR HENRY WOOTTON.

Das Wasser rauscht, das Wasser schwoll ;
 Ein Fischer sass daran,
Sah nach dem Angel ruhevoll,
 Kühl bis an 's Herz hinan.

GOETHE.

SECOND DAY.

SENEX, JULIAN, SIMON PARADICE.

Julian. WELL, though not wedded to seclusion, I confess there are many charms in a Country life; but much depends on association.

Senex. He only whose early days were spent amidst rural scenes can truly love the Country. Yet, as I stroll through these meadows, I feel, though lovely to look upon, they are, to my eyes, less beautiful than they were. The cowslip and the harebell blossom still; trees that were young when I was a boy are still growing, and looking green; the lark carols

as blithely as ever ; the grasshopper vaults as high, and chirps as gaily ; and the thrush sings from the hawthorn that feeds him in the winter. While Nature each season renews her livery, man has but one Spring ; and through the long vista of declining years regards the happy hours of youth as the first sinner looked back on Paradise.

Still glides the stream, and shall not cease to glide ;
The Form remains, the Function never dies ;
While we, the brave, the mighty, and the wise—
We men, who in our morn of youth defied
The elements, must vanish.

J. I wonder what our friend Simon thinks of the country ?

S. You can ask him. I'll wager he would prefer his own native meadows to the streets of London, notwithstanding the legends once current hereabouts that they are paved with gold. Believe me, the countryman looks anxiously for the return of the swallow and the cuckoo. Doesn't

he, Simon? What is it they sing of the cuckoo in our country?

Simon. The cuckoo's a vine bird
A zengs as a vlies,
A brengs us good tidins,
And tells us no lies;
A zucks th' smael birds' eggs,
To make his voice clear,
And the mwore a cries "Cuckoo!"
The zummer draaws near.

Now, vor my paart, I dwont pertickler like the wosbird. A's too vond o' other people's whoams; and, as to a's voice, a allus zims to I to ha' zummut in 's kecker. If a 'd yeat a feaw scare o' snails, as the blackbirds and dreshes do, instead o' smael birds' eggs, a 'd vind 's zengin' mended 'oondervul, I 'm zhure. But it's pleazant time when the cuckoo's about—that's zartin. The whate be chit-tin'; the mawing graass looks vrum; the elmin trees ha' got ael their leaves on, and the young rucks are makin' a cad-dle.

S. What other verse is it they have about the cuckoo ?

Simon. The Cuckoo comes in April,
Stays the month o' May,
Zengs a zong at Midzummer,
And then a gwoes away.

S. Ay, that 's it. The bird chooses the three most delicious months of the year ; and, though his name has become a by-word among us, his advent glads the heart of man, notwithstanding his "note of fear." The small birds, however, give him a dusting occasionally, either out of revenge for the petty larceny he commits on them, or for his resemblance to the hawk, with whom they sometimes venture too far, as with the owl, and suffer for their temerity. Yet, long live the cuckoo !—

——“ Time may come when never more
The wilderness shall hear the lion roar ;
But, long as cock shall crow from household perch
To rouse the dawn, soft gales shall speed thy wing,
And thy erratic voice be faithful to the Spring.”

J. You spoke of the thrush loving the hawthorn. There are several of those beautiful trees in this neighbourhood. One often sees them on the hills and downs, standing alone, their beautiful foliage exhibiting in strong contrast their gnarled and weather-beaten trunks. It is truly a most picturesque tree. Can you tell why they are so frequently seen thus detached?

S. “A bird of the air shall tell of the matter.” Many of them are of very great age. I can fancy the thrush, the ouzel, or the wood-pigeon, scared by the fowler in ancient times, dropping a berry here and there, which took root, to the amazement of the wandering swineherd. The Anglo-Saxons regarded this tree with superstitious veneration; and in some parts of Ireland, to this day, if you talked of cutting one down, you would create a terrible hubbub in the neighbourhood. I am hardly free from the imputation of tree-worship, so much de-

nounced by the Anglo-Saxon laws, and have an especial regard for the hawthorn, beautiful at this season while it teems with its delicious perfume, and cheerful to look upon, studded with countless ripening berries, when hoar winter nips both man and beast, and makes your hearthstone pleasanter than the meadows.

J. I have no doubt many of these trees are of a great age, coeval perhaps with the oldest oaks and yews in the kingdom. Old records tell us of several of the latter two; but the hawthorn perhaps lost—if not its beauty—its dignity under the Norman rule. Speaking of the age of trees, did you ever notice the old saying that an oak is five hundred years growing, five hundred years in a state of maturity, and another five hundred decaying? You will find it among the quaint list of “*Demaundes joyous*,” printed by Wynkyn de Worde in 1511.

S. From what we have confirmed, as to

the age of the oak, there seems some truth in this saying of our forefathers. The oldest men in this neighbourhood, and some have reached eighty years, say they remember trees which are “not a mossle chainged” since they were breeched. But much has been written on ancient trees known to have been standing before the Conquest. Yonder is an elm, which was a lusty tree when the Parliament men chased the fugitive Royalists across these meadows.

“ Sure thou didst flourish once, and many springs,
Many bright mornings, much dew, many showers
Pass’d o’er thy head ; many light hearts and wings,
Which now are dead, lodged in thy living towers.”

Yes, this field was once stoutly contested for nearly a whole day.

J. Heaven grant that such quiet scenes may never again be the theatre of such fearful doings ! History usually gives us but the outline of events, and many an

episode of blood and pillage in those strife-ful days is lost to remembrance.

S. We may guess the fate of many a happy and innocent family at that period, abandoned to the rage and lust of an infuriate and licentious soldiery, whose characters may be inferred when we read of the devices borne by their officers. One Middleton, a Parliament man, had for his device an armed figure killing a bishop, with the motto, "*Exosus Deo et sanctis*," and underneath "*root and branch*." Langrish, another captain, bore a death's head, with a bishop's mitre, and "*Mori potius quam papatus*." Nothing, however, can exceed the impiety and indecency of some of the Royalist captains, who adopted devices and mottoes which can [neither be described nor written down. But come, Simon waits for us below the bridge; let us see what sport we are to have this fine morning.

——“ Hark, how through the peopled air
The busy murmur glows !
The insect youth are on the wing,
Eager to taste the honeyed spring,
And float amid the liquid noon ;
Some lightly o'er the current skim,
Some show their gaily gilded trim,
Quick glancing to the sun.”

Ha ! the May-fly, too, is rising ; the angler will not leave the river with an empty pannier to-day.

J. When this fly is on the water, the fish will take no other, I have heard.

S. Ask those who told you so if they ever tried. But we will soon put it to the test. The mention of that dogma reminds me that last season, in the month of April, with a cold north-west wind, which curled the surface of the water well, I took, in a part of this stream, within the space of half-a-mile, sixteen brace of fine trouts, and most of them with the artificial May-fly, though of course not one of these creatures had made its appearance.

I have been equally successful with the May-fly's "counterfeit presentment" in streams where that insect is never seen. The fact is, that when the trout is really inclined to feed, there are few things thrown lightly on the surface, or slowly drawn through the water, which he will not take.

J. I have often observed fish rise and take the leaves which on a windy day are blown into the river. This seems to favour your opinion.

S. True, but you will find the trouts repeatedly reject them. I do not think them so obtuse as to seize everything as *food* which may fall near them; but doubtless, experience, or perhaps instinct, prompts them to *examine* everything that comes in their way. Thus the hairy caterpillar, when feeding on a leaf, may, like the clown sawing the sign-board on which he is perched, eat away until he is precipitated into the

water. In this manner, though hardly discernible by us, fish perhaps often devour any reptile or insect that may be launched on the floating leaf, which is sent adrift again as soon as it is cleared of the creatures sailing upon it. I have had wonderful sport in the months of August and September, the fish rising at almost every fly cast near them, while the leaves were falling occasionally, in consequence of a breeze. Now then, on with a May-fly for "stretcher," and use a hackle for the "bob." Well Simon, have you marked a good trout?

Simon. Eez, zur; there's a featish good un, just under thuck bank yander, if Measter Julian can crape alang by them pales, and kip out o' zite.

J. I'll try, Simon. I see him rising. Now see me give him "the line of invitation." There!—ha! he's gone!

S. Yes; there he goes up stream like a rocket. He saw the shadow of your

rod. He is an old and cunning fish, and is not to be easily caught.

Simon. The best woy to catch *he* is to drow a leetle bit aboove, and let the vly zail auver hin.

J. That last word of our friend's puzzles me a little; is it a corruption of *him* or *it*?

S. It is no corruption, but the pure Saxon pronoun *hyn*; though, strange to say, the editors of our provincial glossaries have not remarked it,—a proof, one may easily perceive, that they have but a very slight acquaintance with the dialects they have undertaken to illustrate. The compilers of some of these works are greatly deceived if they suppose any English dialect is to be illustrated by merely turning over the leaves of an Anglo-Saxon dictionary. Others err as much in concluding, that, as a certain provincial word is not to be discovered in these vocabularies, it is necessarily not

of Anglo-Saxon origin, and, having searched all the ancient northern tongues for derivations, boldly assume it was *imported*!

J. But, is not this word sometimes pronounced like *un*?

S. It is; and the same change was, doubtless, remarked by the scribes in Anglo-Saxon times; hence the variation which we find in their orthography, even in the same page.

J. Then there is the word “thuck,” which I do not remember to have noticed before, though I have frequently remarked “thick.”

S. The first word “thuck” is now not so frequently heard, and is only used by those who adhere to the “owld taak,” as they style it. “Thick” is the natural corruption of “thilk,” which you will find repeatedly in Chaucer, and “thuck” is an equally natural corruption of “thulk,” which you will discover repeatedly in Robert of

Gloster's Chronicle, and in the MS. of Piers Ploughman, edited by Whitaker; so, you see, my friend here is only talking a language which the scholar and the gentleman once used.

Simon. Won't 'e try a leetle bit lawer down, zur. Ize zartin zhure ye'll vind a girt un or two in the mill-tail, if zo be Measter Julian 'oud like to try a minney.

S. What say you to Simon's suggestion; Shall we walk to the mill-tail and try a minnow?

J. With all my heart. Come along; and, as we walk there, tell me what you have to say on "Ize" which I often hear in this neighbourhood.

S. Ha, there you almost bring me to a *non plus*, and I fear you will get, in this instance, conjecture only, the hobby-horse of etymologists, in the place of illustration. The use of "Ize," or "Ise," is not so easily explained. I have little doubt that

it dates from the twelfth century; but I don't remember meeting with it earlier than in Chaucer, in whose inimitable "Canterbury Tales" *I is* is used for *I am* both by the Clerk and by the Miller. I cannot tell whether the illustrious old poet meant this for a *provincial* form of speech; but it is very likely to have been so. The introduction of Norman French produced many hybrid words, and it probably led to "Ize." The use of the *w* for *v* is not confined to the cockneys, as some suppose: it is common in the county of Kent; but there you often find "*I are*" for *I am*, as the vulgar Breton says *Je sommes!* The "English of Kent," so much vaunted in old days, was doubtless a language to which Norman French was *adapted*, whereby it was made more cockney, and less truly English, than the dialects of the "Shires," as the country people of that county to this hour call the other parts of England.

J. I notice that they use “on” or rather, “an,” instead of “*of*,” almost invariably.

S. There is a precedent for that from the earliest times, and it was in use down to the seventeenth century. What says the song,

“Complain my lute, complain *on* him.

In the headings of the chapters of “Reynard the Fox” you find how the different animals complained *on* him; and Dame Juliana Berners, recounting the terms used by sportsmen in her day, when describing the ages of the deer, says,

“And ye speke of the Bucke, the fyrst yere he is
A Fawne soukyng on his dam say as I you wys.”

You laugh at my illustrations; but I think you will find that I have authority for what I have advanced.

J. In sober earnestness, I feel interested in them; and henceforward shall

endeavour to become better acquainted with the language of your humble neighbours.

S. I am glad to hear your confession that I have not pleaded vainly in behalf of my smock-frocked friends and their dialect, which, though I am no philologist, I hope I have shown is entitled to some consideration, if only on the score of its antiquity. And now, let us try for one of Simon's trouts, for here is the mill-tail. Ho! Simon! my spinning-rod, and a minnow for Mr. Julian. Why, what's the fellow about.

J. He's making a detour to avoid the miller's bees, who seem disposed to resent his entering their fee-simple without leave.

Simon. 'Begs yer pardon, zur; but they there wosbirds zimd rayther cam and mischievul. When I went oon woy they wanted to gwo there too. Um zeemed

mindèd to ha' a turn wi' I as they did wi' Jack Ockle.

S. Why, when was that, Simon?

Simon. Laast zummer, zur. Jack 'ad cot a girt beg trout just agin thuck pwoast, and a run backerds to kip's line tight, right bang auver oone o' they hives. Massey haugh! what a buzzin' and vizzin' there was, to be zhure! out um coomed like vengeance, and pitched into Jack as if they was mad. The miller zeed it ael, but cou'dn't come anighst un. Jack roared like a town-bull, and drowed down his rod, and jumped bang into the river to zave hizzelf; but the leetle wosbirds watchèd un till a coomed up, and went at un agen. Very lucky var'n it coomed on to rain very hard, and a craawled out purty nigh dead, wi' his yead and vace covered wi' stinges, zo that a cou'd only zee's woy whoam out o' the carner o' oon eye. Poor owld Molly cou'dn't thenk what galley

craw 'twas as coomed whoam to her. "Who in the 'ouruld be you?" zays Molly. "Why, I'll be whipped if 't aint our Jack!" and awoy a hobbled up street to vetch Measter Smith, the cow-doctor. 'Twas a lang time avoor a looked like hizzelf agen.

S. A pretty episode in the life of an angler, and worthy to be recorded with the story I told you yesterday. Now then, Julian, pitch your minnow into that eddy, and if you should peradventure hook a fish, be warned by the fate of Jack Ockle, and don't run down a bee-hive in your ecstasy. You have him! steady!—he's a fine fellow, and will fight for it; keep him clear of that post,—that's well—wind up. No! another plunge, and another! don't pull him against the stream, or he's lost. Get below, and gently tow him down towards that slope. Give me the landing-net. There he is!—a fine fish indeed; a good

three-pounder, if I mistake not. Carry him into the miller's wife, and ascertain his weight, Simon. And now let me tell you a story of the voracity and daring of some of these larger fish, which, when not inclined to feed, you may tempt in vain, but at other times will suffer themselves to be caught by the veriest bungler. An elderly gentleman fishing at Rickmansworth, on the river Colne in Hertfordshire, in the Summer of 1815, having laboured all day with the fly, and contributed but little to his pannier, before quitting the water-side bethought him of having a venture with a snail, which he substituted for his artificial temptations. In a short time he struck a very heavy fish, which, after playing for a while, he at length brought to the surface of the water, though not sufficiently near enough to make sure of him. The fish was a large one; and, the captor's attendant having quitted the ground and

gone to a neighbouring cottage, he was left without a landing-net. There was, consequently, no alternative but "playing him till tired,"—an antiquated practice now-a-days, and never resorted to but in desperate cases, like the present. The creature at length appeared to be exhausted, and was towed to the bank; but the angler, in trying to lift him out of the water, tore the hook from his mouth, and the prize slowly sunk to the bottom. The stream was at that spot deep and clear, but not swift; and the angler had the mortification of seeing his trout lying gasping almost within his reach. Perplexed and baffled, he put on another snail; but without hope. By this time the fish had recovered, and began to move out into the middle of the stream. The snail was placed before him, and, wonderful to relate, he darted at it, gorged it, and struck off up the stream. This time the angler was

more successful; and after a struggle of some minutes, during which his attendant returned, the fish was landed, and found to weigh five pounds. This is a well-authenticated fact; and it is the more remarkable, as the fish must have seen his captor at their first encounter. But here's Simon with our fish. Well, what does he weigh?

Simon. Dree pound two ounces and a haaf, zur. A 's a 'oondervul vine un, to be zhure. A 's got a back like a peg. I 'oonders how many scare o' minnies it 's tuck to vat'un.

S. I think we may try for another in this mill-tail. Let me fit you with a fresh minnow. Cast over to the opposite bank, and draw it towards you. There — you had a run!

J. Yes; he has taken my minnow, and got off.

S. Try again. Another minnow, Simon.

J. Here 's another !

S. Steady. Ha ! he 's gone ! you lost that fish by pulling him against the stream ; and, if I mistake not, a portion of your tackle to boot.

J. Yes ; confound him ! he has taken my hooks, and about a yard of foot-line. I feel as much ashamed of this as a Spartan would have been at the loss of his shield.

S. Don't fret about it. This is one of the chances of the angler ; but, let me tell you, it is always most hazardous to pull a fish against the stream. It should ever be your especial care, the moment he is hooked, to get below him as promptly as possible. Let us proceed further up the river, and perchance we may, as we return, happen on this very fish. That this is not altogether impossible I will show you, as we walk along, in a story told me by an old angler some time since ; though you may

not recover your hooks in the same way. This gentleman was fishing for trout with a minnow, when, either from the inadvertence of which you were guilty, or some fault of his tackle, it was carried away by a lusty trout. Having refitted with a fly, he proceeded down the stream, and met with good sport. Returning by the pool where he had lost his tackle, he resolved to have another venture, and had scarcely made his cast, when he had the good fortune to hook a thumping fish. He was greatly surprised, however, to find that his acquaintance, after a few plunges, came to the surface of the water, reeling and dead-beaten. Having landed him, astonishment succeeded to surprise, when he discovered that, instead of hooking the fish, he had caught the dissevered tackle hanging from its mouth. During his absence the trout had evidently become exhausted by endeavours to free himself

from the hooks which he had carried away in the first assault.

Here is a part of the stream where I have generally had good sport. We'll try it as far as that hawthorn-tree yonder, and then we'll see what Simon has in my second pannier in the way of luncheon, which we can eat beneath its shade, like true anglers, with the sauce of a good appetite. There, I think, if you can manage to cast your fly under those alder-bushes, you may raise a good trout ; but, if you do, take care of that patch of weeds hard by.

J. I have him ! he's a thumping fish : he took the fly slowly, and, you see, is gone to the bottom.

S. If I mistake not, you have hooked a chub. Wind up a yard or two, and walk down stream with him. Yes ; I guessed rightly. The landing-net, Simon, —there he is. He has taken your hackle, I see, as I predicted.

J. You have a quick eye for a fish. How did you know it was not a trout?

S. By the quiet manner in which he took the fly, and by his dull, leaden plunge. Though a large trout is not so brisk generally as a smaller one, he will give you infinitely more trouble than the chub.

Simon. A 's martal timerzome vish, zur: but still um likes a good vat bait, too; 'specially a dumbledore.

S. Yes, Simon is quite right; and therefore, when you do fish for chub, use a good large, hairy palmer, or an imitation of the humble-bee or dumbledore, as they call it hereabouts. I have seen some in the fishing-tackle shops in London, dressed to perfection. And now I shall cross the ford here, and give you the meeting at the old hawthorn-tree, near which there is a foot-bridge. You will find some

good fish just where the bank rises—*au revoir*. Simon will accompany you.

[*Exeunt*.

The Hawthorn Tree.—SENEX, JULIAN,
SIMON PARADICE, *meeting*.

S. Well, what sport? Your pannier, I hope, is heavier than when I left you.

J. Turn them out, Simon. I have not been idle, you see.

S. Faith, you have not. Six fine trouts, and another chub. Like Corax, the rhetorician, I begin to fear I have bred a scholar who excels his master. I have killed only a brace; but they are fine ones.

J. They are indeed, and full fairly worth my six; but I am delighted with my morning's work, which has given me an appetite, I warrant you.

S. Let us sit down. Hand me the basket, Simon. What has good Mistress Gerard provided for us? A cold fowl,

and a neat's tongue. We might fare worse.

J. Ay, and have a worse appetite.

S. Though mine is generally good, I have wished sometimes for the digestion of a ploughman. "*O dura messorum ilia!*" says Horace, who probably knew what a weak stomach was. I have often seen Simon here eat a couple of cucumbers, each more than a foot long, as mere adjuncts to a noontide meal. Eh, Simon?

Simon. Eez, zur, um beant much when a body's lear. Our grammer used to zay yettin' too much was wus than drenkin' too much, — "the spit kills mwore than th' spigot."

S. A very good saying too. Note, Julian, that Simon does not quote his *grammar* for this adage, but his *grandmother*; the word not being this time derived from the Anglo-Saxon, but from the Norman-French, *grandmère*. While on the subject

of eating, let me tell you a story of our parish schoolmistress, who some time since, when the children were kindly presented with a cake, became suddenly indignant at the youthful gormandizing, and cried out, "Well, I never did see children eat at such a rate! where's your manners? Put the rest in your handkerchers!"

J. Thank you, both for your illustration of *grammer*, and for your anecdote; but, pray, what does Simon mean by *lear*?

S. That's a word which ought to be drafted into our next new dictionary. "Lear" expresses the state of stomach for which "hungry" is not sufficiently descriptive; and as it is a good Anglo-Saxon word, I recommend it to the notice of our lexicographers. The Germans have it; but with them I believe it merely stands for empty. Its use is not confined to this part of the country.

J. It is "an excellent good word," as

Ancient Pistol phrases it. My own stomach readily supplies the gloss—I feel *lear*. Let us fall to, at once.

S. I know of nothing more beneficial to digestion than a day's fly-fishing. You will often eat your snack in this way with a better relish than a dinner at a wealthy friend's, who has laboured to bring every dainty in season before you. Even this food, however, is luxurious compared with the hard and simple fare of hundreds around us.

J. In all parts of the world the producers feed upon the refuse! — “*Sic vos non vobis!*” &c.

S. Universally: in those countries of the continent which furnish corn in such infinite abundance, the peasantry are fed on bread which the English clown—coarse as his food is at times—would find difficult to eat. I was lately shown some bread—the common food of the peasantry of Auvergne—

which they keep for more than twelve months, and which must be well soaked before it can be eaten. The bread of our ancestors must have been of this description, especially in early times. I have often noticed that the teeth in skulls taken from Anglo-Saxon tumuli, are much worn, as if by masticating hard food. But this gossiping of an old man must tire you.

J. Nay, nay: I thought you knew me better. Though I cannot enter entirely into all your feelings, I am a lover of gossip and of the picturesque; and, if a man will not talk unprofitably, he will find me a patient *listener*. There is no scandal in your discourse; and therefore I derive both pleasure and profit from it.

S. They are not all pearls that fall from the wisest lips; but, if I do not always discourse wisely, I shall not offend your ears with evil reports. No:—

“ Better than such discourse doth silence long,
Long, barren silence, square with my desire ;
To sit without emotion, hope, or aim,
In the loved presence of my cottage-fire,
And listen to the flapping of the flame,
Or kettle whispering its faint undersong.”

Come, let us be moving again. There
be yet “lusty trouts” on the feed.

[*Exeunt.*

THIRD DAY.

Be full, ye courts ! be great who will !
Search for Peace with all your skill :
Open wide the lofty door,
Seek her on the marble floor :
In vain ye search the domes of Care !
Grass and flowers Quiet treads,
On the meads and mountain heads
Along with Pleasure close allied,
Ever by each other's side.

DYER.

THIRD DAY.

SENEX, JULIAN, SIMON PARADICE.

Time—The peep of day.

Julian. What a lovely morning! we are up before the Sun.

Senex. He will rise in ten minutes, if the calendar tell truly. I am glad we are stirring so early, for sunrise at this season should tempt every man from his bed. What says Dan Chaucer?—

“ For May wol have no slogardie a-night,
The seson priketh every gentil herte,
And maketh him out of his slepe to sterte,
And sayth ‘ Arise, and do thin observance.’ ”

The notes of birds alone break the hushy stillness that reigns around us. The lark,

the throstle, the ouzel, and the whole tribe of songsters have commenced their hosannahs. Every insect is on the move, the grasshopper bestirs himself, and the spider looks out on his dew-bespangled tracery. The morning-star is fading before the approach of day. The owl, weary of night-prowling, hurries away to his retreat in the old barn; and the magpie in yonder elm, with his pert chatter, provokes the jay in the thicket:—

——“ The jay, the rook, the daw,
And each harsh pipe (discordant heard alone)
Aid the full concert, while the stock-dove breathes
A melancholy murmur through the whole.”

J. What a strange nest the magpie builds! I remember, when a boy, trying to rob one and scratching my hands sadly.

S. It is certainly a curious piece of bird-architecture, and shows the superior cunning of the pie to the rook and the

crow. Piers Ploughman has something to say of its structure:—

“ I had wonder at whom,
And wher the pye lerned
To ligge the stikkes
In which she leyeth and bredeth.
There nys wrighte, as I wene,
Sholde werche hir nestes to paye ;
If any mason made a molde thereto,
Muche wonder it were.”

The pie is a beautiful and cheerful bird : and though man resents severely his little larcenies, he yet loves to build near a homestead despite of ill-usage.

J. The country people are at enmity, I believe, with all carrion-birds, and the pie is one of the most mischievous of this class.

S. All birds are occasionally mischievous, but the good which many of them perform more than counterbalances the evil. Remember, I am no stickler for all the prejudice and superstition of my humble neighbours, who are often

blindly wrong. There is some reason for their hostility to the crow and the pie; but the war of extermination which they carry on against many of the feathered race, can only be excused on the ground of ignorance and their attachment to old notions and prejudices, from which the better educated of the last century were not free. For instance, you will find them hereabouts destroy that beautiful and sagacious bird the starling, because they believe it kills the young pigeons. Now, the starling is an insectivorous bird, which must devour myriads of destructive creatures every season. They must be welcome visitors to flocks of sheep, about which we generally see them congregated, sometimes running on their backs and freeing them from the foul, ugly, and annoying tick which so often troubles that animal. Another bird, which is an especial favourite with me, is much persecuted

by the country people, namely, the titmouse; and yet a pair of these little creatures, if undisturbed, will almost keep a fair-sized garden free from insects and reptiles. A friend of mine, who lives in the neighbourhood of London, occupies one of a row of houses, the gardens of which, as usual, adjoin each other. His neighbour, a door or two off, an idle fellow, often amuses himself by shooting the small birds, and last year he kept up this manly pastime so vigorously, that not even a sparrow could show itself on his premises. Summer came, and with it swarms of that destructive reptile the small green caterpillar, which literally ate up everything in the garden of the cockney sportsman. Not so with my friend's garden, the fruit in which was unusually fine and abundant,—a circumstance which he attributes entirely to the fact of a pair of the smaller species of titmouse having made

their nest in a hole in the garden-wall and bred up a family, which they appeared to feed entirely on this very reptile, bringing in thirty or forty in an hour to the nest, to the great glee of their little ones, who testified their delight at every arrival by audible chirpings.

J. I have often thought that an occasional rigorous winter and the preying of the larger species were sufficient to check the too great increase of small birds. Not only does intense cold destroy numbers of the feathered race, but, according to a friend of mine who has an estate in Scotland, hunger converts the graminivorous bird into a bird of prey at such times. In one hard winter, a few years since, the rooks attacked and killed all the wood-pigeons in his plantations.

S. I do not doubt it, though I have never witnessed such an onslaught here. The wood-pigeon must be a feeble oppo-

ment of the rook, whose hard bill will make more impression on the frost-bound earth on a winter's morning than you can make with a knife. He is formidable, too, on account of his numbers. But see, as we ascend the hill, the sun rises to meet us, and chanticleer, from the old grange yonder, proclaims his approach. Hark! how the shrill reveillé is repeated around,—a note of warning to the village clown, who turns heavily on his pallet and lapses into another nap ere he rises for the day's toil. The lark starts from his bed, and, shaking the dew from his wing, pours out a flood of melody as he ascends into the yet misty air. Are not these sights and scenes that should make a man love the country, even though at other seasons,

“ When blood is nipt and ways be foul,”

and the swoln streams deluge the meadows, he turns to and prefers the comforts of his fireside?

J. I confess they are. I am almost moved to indulge in a rhapsody myself.

S. You smile at this doting of an old man on the scenes of his youth.

J. Nay, you wrong me. I smiled, but not in derision. Dull indeed must he be who could look unmoved on such a scene as this. Yonder is the river, its pale stream brightening into gold. I see the moor-hen moving upon it unconscious of our approach. Shall we have a fine day?

S. A good day for the angler, but not for a pic-nic. I think there will be rain: the sun shines out too brightly at its rising, and, if I mistake not, those clouds rising in the south will bring wet with them. There was rain last night, as you will see by the state of this field we are now entering. It is very slippery on this path. What was that story you were telling me about young Joe Chivers, Simon?

Simon. Haw, about's zlippin back, zur? Why young Joe went to school wi owld Tommy Stretch, zo one day a never coomed till amwoast night. What 's th' rason you be here at this time? zays Tommy. Joe hackered wi' vear—'Begs yer pardon, zays he, 'twas zo uncommon zlippy, ev'ry step I tuk vorrad I went two backerds. Ye young wosbird, zays Tommy, if ye'd done that, ye woudn't be here at all, zo I'll gie 't to 'e unmarcivul—that 's what I wool vor tellin zich lies. Oh dwont 'e! dwont 'e! zays Joey: I'll tell 'e how 'twere. I gied up gettin here at all, zo I turned back to gwo to mother's and I zipped back here, so dwont 'e wallop I.—Did 'e ever hear the stwory o' Joe's vather on th' bridge yander? A rum owld customer was owld Joe.

S. Well, tell us the story, Simon.

Simon. Why one marnin, many years ago, owld Joe was lukin' auver the bridge,

a watchin' the vishes, when a genelman vrom Lunnun coomed by. I zay, vather, zays the strainger, what d'ye caal this out here bruk? 'Th' owld bwoy was a leetle bit dunch, and a didn't year'n very plain. D'zay? says he. How d'ye caal this bruk? zays the strainger agen. Haw,—caal un, zays owld Joe; um dwont caal un at ael um dwont: a allus cooms this woy wi'hout callin'! Zo the cockney went off in a girt pelt and towld un to gwo and hang's self.

S. [*Aside to J.*] I believe that story was known long before old Joe was born, but the paternity of many better ones might with as much justice be questioned. Here's the river. Let us put to, and try our luck at this spot; I have often had good sport here.

J. I am ready—Where shall we begin?

S. Try a cast under that patch of weeds, where the shadow is deepest.

J. I have a fish, and a mettlesome one,

too, but I find I am getting the better of him—he shows now. Pshaw! he is but small after all, but he tugged like a fish of a couple of pounds.

S. Doubtless he did, for, see, you have hooked him foul, near the ventral fin, which makes all the difference in the world, and gives a fish full power to plunge in all directions. Come, clear your line, and take another cast a little lower down. A good fish generally lies near that sluice. Well done, you have him—don't let him take you too far—that 's right; now you have turned him, and he begins to grow weary. The net, Simon. So, that was well performed; he 's a fine fellow, and if we kill a few more such, you will forgive my calling you so early.

J. Nay, I am delighted at your having helped me to throw off sloth, and tempted me abroad. It is a reproach to a man to lie a-bed at such a season. The river

appears deep here, and less exposed to poachers.

S. Yes. The fish are safe in this spot and the river is well staked. The mention of poaching reminds me of an event which happened in the north of England about twenty years since. On the 15th of June, 1827, the two brothers of a man named Winter, a notorious poacher, came to the Steward of the late Sir Philip Musgrave at Edenhall, to request that a boat might be lent them that they might search in the river for their brother, who had been a short time missing. His landing-net having been found floating down the stream, it was supposed that he was drowned. The Steward accompanied the men to the river Eamont, which they dragged in different places with a net, and, after some hours' toil, they succeeded in drawing out the body from a deep pool in the river, under some rocks called the Giant's Cave; and,

singular enough, at the same haul they caught one of the largest trouts ever found in that river, weighing nearly seven pounds. The men seemed more anxious to secure the fish than the body of their drowned brother ; but the gamekeeper, being one of the dragging party, took the prize up to the Hall. A Coroner's Inquest was duly held on the body, and a verdict found " Accidentally Drowned." The country people laid the homicide on the fish, which, they said, had dragged the poacher from a slippery stone into the pool as a judgment for *stealing* ! And this was the moral for about three years afterwards, when an old Irishman nicknamed Sandy, an idle character, who supported himself by any chance employment, eked out by a little poaching, was taken dangerously ill. Finding himself on his death-bed, he declared he could not die easy unless he made a clean breast and confessed a great crime

that he had been guilty of. He then stated that a few nights before the discovery of Winter's body, he was going to fish in the pool under the Giant's Cave, and being on the top of the rocks he looked down and saw Winter there busily fishing. He halloed to him to go away from that spot, as it was his part of the river, and Winter had no right to be there. Winter refused to go, and replied he had as much right to be there as Sandy, upon which the latter threw a large stone on the poacher below, and knocked him down into the river. He then ran away, and when he afterwards heard of Winter being discovered drowned, he kept the occurrence a secret until he found himself dying.

J. A curious story, truly: it might furnish matter for a melodrama. I believe the trout in the Eamont do not usually exceed three to the pound?

S. No: the gentleman who communi-

cated to me the above particulars, informed me that he never saw one more than four pounds weight, excepting that taken with the body of the drowned poacher. By-the-by, Simon, what has become of old Iles?—he was the most wary poacher in these parts—the keepers could never come up with him.

Simon. Haw, a's very bad, zur; a's got the rheumatiz in 's jintes, and caant craal out ov 's bed. A was a terrable chap var a hur (hare) to be zhure when a was younger. Our measter had a man veaw hurs under the linchards, and the tenant's dogs used to caddle 'um vinely, and cot zum on 'um—zo a zays to 'um ael, zays he—if you dwon't hang them grayhounds o' yourn, I'll turn you out o' yer varms, that 's what I wool. Mwost on 'um did as they was ardered, but Jerry Sage (queer owld chap he were zhurely)—zays to I, dang it, Zimon, if I ha' anything to do wi' kill-

in' th' owld dog, and when measter went to 'un to bleaw 'un up vinely var kippin' on hin—Jerry zays to 'n, 'Ax yer pardun, zur, zhure enough I havn't hang'd 'un, but a bean't a grayhound now. Bean't a grayhound? why, what do 'e mane? Why, zur, when us yeard o' yer arder, us takes a pair o' zhears and cuts his ears and tayl off and made a *maastif* an hin, and caals 'un *Lion*.'

S. There 's a story for you in a choice Anglo-Saxon dialect: I 'll supply the gloss at some other time. What think you of the scenery hereabouts?

J. It is certainly charming, and appears to advantage in the morning sun.

S. This spot is a favourite one with me.

“Here Nature in her unaffected dress,
Plaited with valleys and embossed with hills,
Enchased with silver streams, and fringed with
woods,
Sits lovely in her native russet.”

Fewer traces of human innovation are to be found here than in most rural districts. I love these sequestered nooks, where a man may rest, and calling home his thoughts, commune with himself and be still.

“ Dear Solitude, the soul’s best friend,
That man acquainted with himself dost make,
And all his Maker’s wonders to intend,
With thee I here converse at will,
And would be glad to do so still,
For it is thou alone that keep’st the soul awake.”

And now I shall leave you for a short time, and fish up this little tributary stream. I will rejoin you at the old pollard-willow which you see by the brook’s side yonder.

[*Exeunt.*

The old pollard-willow. SENEX, JULIAN,
SIMON PARADICE, *meeting.*

S. Well, what sport?

J. Excellent. I have three brace; but there is a fish rising yonder far beyond

my reach. I have tried in vain to throw to him.

S. I don't doubt it, I could not throw so far myself, but a little wading will sometimes make up for such deficiency. The water is not above mid-thigh, and though I prefer generally a dry skin to a wet one, I don't like to be defied in any weather—much less on such a mild day as this. It is shallow water where that fish is rising. [*He wades.*] There ! I have your friend.

J. You have, and he's a fine fish. Give me the landing-net, Simon.

S. Steady : he is somewhat headstrong, and is not to be got out so readily. Wait till I first land myself, for this is a fish of mettle. There, now I am fairly ashore again I can gently bring him to the bank :—out with him !

J. What a lovely trout ! he looks like a piece of beautiful enamelled work, studded with rubies, and his colours seem heightened

by the bright greensward on which he lies. What is his weight?

S. About two pounds; but he is unusually well fed, and no doubt has kept that shallow against all comers for some time past—lying in wait during the day for any fly that may sail over him, and at night supping on the shoals of minnows which abound in some parts of this stream. I am acquainted with a small stream which, towards autumn, is much contracted by the growth of weeds, causing the formation of pools, in each of which a large trout lies in wait for everything that comes down. I have seldom thrown into one of these pools without hooking its tenant, and his place is invariably taken by the fish next in size. For this kind of fishing, however, you require a stiff fly-rod, a short line, and *one* fly only, unless you care not for being “hitched” at every throw. You must strike instantly, and not suffer

the fish to have an inch of line, or he is gone.

J. I have heard, that in the smaller streams in Scotland, the biggest fish take up their stations in the pools, devour their own progeny one by one, and then, like famished wolves, snatch at almost anything that may be offered them, to their inevitable destruction.

S. A large trout is little inferior to the pike in voracity; but he is not so indiscriminate, nor so rash: the pike dashes at anything, animate or inanimate, that comes near him. I have heard of more than one instance of his seizing the plummet of the angler while trying the depth of the stream; and a friend of mine, while bottom-fishing some years since, caught a perch that, while landing, was seized by a pike, which however managed to get free again.

J. I have known instances of their seizing a hooked fish. This disposition of

the pike to prey upon the hooked or helpless fish, is favourable to the troller.

S. No doubt it is, if a fish is in any way crippled, or spawning: it must then be an easy prey to its ferocious enemies. A very ludicrous instance of the voracity of the pike was related to me a short time since. A gentleman, in Northamptonshire, was seated quietly in a summer-house by the margin of a large pond, watching the water-fowl feeding upon it. Suddenly the geese and ducks rose from the water and took flight with loud cries, one old goose making more noise than the rest. A large pike had seized her foot, and in her flight she had dragged the old tyrant clean out of the water and shaken herself free from his grasp.

Simon. I do b'lieve nothing comes amiss to um. Last zummer, zome o' the bwoys was a rat huntin' up by the bridge, and the dogs started a girt rat, and off a went

acress the bruk, when, jist as a'd got to th' middle, up cum'd a pur o' jaaws as big as a gray-hound's, and down went the rat in a minnit ! Owld Iles once cot a pike, and when a aupened hin a found a girt rat, dree callow wablins, part of a good-sized vish, and two other thengs as um couldn't quite make out.

S. Ay, I remember that fish being caught and cut open. The "dree callow wablins" were the three unfledged nestlings of a yellow-hammer, and the wonder was how the creature had obtained them. The country-people, knowing that the yellow-hammer is a careless builder, and chooses a very low situation for its nest, supposed the pike had invaded it and kidnapped the young brood ; but it is not improbable that some ruthless urchins had been a bird's nesting, and plundered a nest of its callow inmates, which they afterwards threw into the river, where they were, of course, soon appropriated.

And now, let us sit down and repair this rod of mine, which, in the last bout, showed symptoms of weakness that should be looked to in time. Let me see,—yes, here it is.

J. What—do you use your knife?

S. Yes; it is best to do so at once and splice the parts, which may be easily effected with a length of waxed silk. I am always prepared for such a contingency, and would advise you to follow my example; for, to break your rod at a distance from home and not have the means of repairing the damage, is a mischance which argues against the providence of the angler. See, by carefully adapting the severed parts, I bind them together thus, and the rod is as serviceable as ever.

J. I shall endeavour to profit by your advice and teaching. You are right in your prognostic of a wet day. The sun is already deprived of half its lustre, and there is a rainbow yonder, which is the

herald of wet, I believe, when seen in the morning. What says Simon?

Simon. Eez, zur—it 's allus a zign o' wet then: as we zays in this country—

“ The rainbow in th' marnin'
Gies the shepherd warnin'
To car' his girt cwoat on his back ;

But,

The rainbow at night
Is the shepherd's delight,
For then no girt cwoat wull he lack.”

J. How lovely the landscape looks beneath that splendid arc, while the birds seem to sing with tenfold vehemence as it brightens. The thrush's song, in yonder hawthorn bush, is delightfully sweet.

S. Yes, he has already breakfasted on the snails which this humid morning has tempted to venture forth. The angler does not find a meal so readily, and I must presently entreat the hospitality of an honest miller, who has before now given me both food and shelter.

Simon. The dreshes gwo a gogglin' afore it's light. When I was a bwoy, I used to find they was allus afore a body, get up when ye would.

J. I am a little at fault again. Pray, what does Simon mean by "gwoin' a goggling?"

S. A *goggle* is a snail's shell. The word, though in a corrupt form, is one of the few in provincial use derived from the Norman-French—*coquille*. To go a goggling is to go a picking up snail's shells—a favourite pastime of country urchins. Simon alludes to the habits of the thrushes and blackbirds, who prey upon land snails, first cracking the shell by seizing it in their beaks and dashing it against a stone. In this way they destroy thousands of the most brilliant-coloured shells, which are always brighter than those the creature has vacated.

J. Yes, I am told that some of the

dealers in foreign shells, in London, have a trick of varnishing what they call a "dead shell," so as to make it appear like one from which the snail has been extracted.

S. Well, then you will easily see why Simon complains that he was always forestalled by the thrushes and blackbirds, when he went "a goggling." You can seldom traverse a green lane at this season without disturbing some of these birds thus engaged, who testify their displeasure at your approach and fly off with a saucy sort of scream. And here let me again allude to the good offices rendered by some birds to man. The number of slugs and snails destroyed by them in a wet season, must, in some places, save the crops from utter annihilation. I have often, within the limits of a single acre of turnips, flushed more than a score of thrushes which had been drawn thither in search of snails and slugs. Notwithstanding this, it is well known that

many birds are destructive to fruit-trees in bud as well as to ripe crops.

J. I believe it is White, in his delightful "History of Selborne," who remarks that the thrush, the blackbird, the wood-lark and the willow-wren, become silent about Midsummer, and take up their song again in September. He seems to think that birds are then inclined to sing because the temperature of spring and autumn is about equal.

S. His inference is a very natural one. The robin is a very good illustration of this, for he sings again in the autumn, even when the lime-tree—his favourite haunt—is denuded of its leaves. The wren's note is often heard in winter time if it be not frosty, and I have many times heard both the lark and the thrush singing delightfully on a warm day in January. These birds are moved to sing by various sounds—you will often find them swelling their little

throats, pent up in cages, in the noisiest thoroughfares in London. I remember a lark at an oyster-shop, which, when a resident in the metropolis, I was once in the habit of passing, in one of the squalid-looking courts in the purlieus of Drury Lane, which used to sing till near midnight—the gas-light its bright sun in that murky and impure region, and the little patch of grass on which it stood and sang, an apology for its native meadows; no bad type of thousands of the young and healthy who quit the country to toil and perish in a hugely overgrown and overgrowing city!

J. If I loved you less, I should envy you this return to and enjoyment of the scenes and habits of your youth.

S. It appears to me to be the natural feeling of the healthy-minded in advancing age. How many affecting instances are on record of persons returning, after a life of almost perpetual wandering, to seek a

last refuge in the place of their birth and childhood. Shakspeare quitted the company of all that were witty and learned, leaving the dissolute companions of his earlier days to strut and fret their hour, to die in his native town; and does he not picture to us old debauched Sir John, in his last moments, “babbling o’ green fields?”

J. True, true: if you run on thus, I shall forswear the town, and betake me to a country life.

S. Don’t misunderstand me. I do not say that London is without its attractions;—its antiquity — its noble river — its localities, consecrated by a thousand recollections and associations, render it one of the most interesting cities on earth. Its history is less bloody than that of Paris and other cities of the Continent; and, although it has often been the theatre of violence and cruelty, it has not witnessed the scenes which have rendered Venice for ever infamous; but a

couple of months in London, in the winter, are sufficient for a man who really loves the country. See, the storm is coming over us. If you would avoid a wet skin, you had better cross the bridge, and seek shelter in the miller's house, which you will find at the end of the lane. I shall fish during the shower.

J. As my coat is a light one, I shall take your hint, and run on to the miller's ; but, first, tell me the name of the bird running up that tree yonder.

S. That bird is the wryneck, the herald of the cuckoo in the spring, as the redwing is of the woodcock in winter. You know the rhyme :—

“ The wryneck comes to stir our laughter,
And the cuckoo follows after.”

We have a great variety of birds in this district, and it is not surprising that they should love such a neighbourhood. I can easily imagine why birds haunt such scenes

as these ; but I confess I have occasionally been somewhat at a loss to account for our finding them in wild districts, where a patch of verdure is not seen for miles. I remember, when in Ireland some years ago, strolling out very early one beautiful summer's morning in the neighbourhood of Glenties, in the wilds of Donegal, and hearing at one and the same time the cuckoo among the hills, the corncrake in the scanty patches of long coarse grass, the skylark in the air, and the chattering of three magpies in a clump of small lime-trees—the only trees within miles of the spot, and certainly the only ones within sight—at the rear of a house near the town. In this wild and barren region, each of these creatures must have found its proper food. It is not surprising to see the gull, the hawk, the kite, and the hooded-crow in such desolate tracts ; but it is difficult to learn how the smaller birds subsist, and protect their young from

birds of prey in places utterly destitute of shelter. Ha ! the storm is upon you. You had better run to the miller's, while I fish up to the mill-head, for I have always taken fine fish during a shower. [*Exeunt.*



FOURTH DAY.

Often, to our comfort, we shall find
The sharded beetle in a safer hold
Than is the full-winged eagle. Oh, this life
Is nobler than attending for a check ;
Richer than doing nothing for a bauble ;
Prouder than rustling in unpaid-for silk.
Such gain the cap of him, that makes them fine,
Yet keeps his book uncrossed ;—no life like ours.

SHAKSPERE.

Süsse heilige Natur,
Lass mich gehn an deiner Spur,
Leite mich an deiner Hand,
Wie ein Kind am Gängel-band.

STOLBERG.

FOURTH DAY.

The river-side. Enter SENEX and JULIAN followed by SIMON PARADICE, bearing two heavily laden panniers.

Time—Sunset.

Senex. Well, what think you of our day's sport?

Julian. Excellent: your success is wonderful, while I am half inclined to think that something more than bungler's luck has attended me. What swarms of insects fill the air! The trouts are gorged with the May-fly, and yet they are still rising and feeding greedily.

S. Yes; and even after sun-down you

will hear them in the darkness, chasing and devouring the minnows on the shallows.

J. Is it not strange that creatures which subsist upon their own species should prey so constantly on minute insects? It is to me inexplicable.

S. The fondness of the trout, and indeed of several other kinds of fish, for this diversion, may be compared to that of many birds and beasts, which relish nothing so much as the prey they have captured by their own agility or cunning. The superior animal, man, in his primitive state, is thus characterized, and in his civilized condition differs but little from the savage in this respect. A Scotch friend of mine one day asked his keeper if he could tell him why so large a fish as the salmon delighted in capturing flies. "God Almighty kens, sir," replied the man, "except its curiosity."

The mention of this anecdote reminds me

of an excellent story which a friend told me of a Scotch angler whom he met at an inn at the town of Inverary, and who invited him to the river-side to witness the capture of a salmon. The invitation was accepted, and the parties repaired to a favourite pool not far from the inn, where the angler, almost at the first cast, had the good fortune to hook a fish. "Eh, sir!" he exclaimed, surprised and elated with his success, "it 's a sawmon peel!" The fish made a vigorous resistance, but, after ten minutes' play,—during which his captor, frantic with excitement, ran into the water nearly up to his chin, to the great amazement of his companion,—it appeared on the surface apparently exhausted, and the angler towed him to the bank. "Now, sir," said he, "if ye'll be so good as to hold him still, and hand me the gaff, I'll settle him." My friend seized the rod and held the captive fish, while the angler struck at it with

the gaff, but oh ! misfortune dire, at the first blow he missed his prey, severed the foot-line, and the freed fish no longer feeling the tension, made a dash with its tail and rushed up the stream ! With a yell of rage and despair, the captor threw away his gaff and fell on his face, exclaiming, " Eh, what a fool ! what a fool I am ! Eh ! was ever such a misfortune ! I was a born fool surely to lose him ! Eh, what a fool I am ! " " It 's pretty clear you are," thought my friend, who, though a bit of an angler, is anything but an enthusiast ; then addressing the unfortunate, " Why, sir, you surely are not making all this insane fuss for the loss of a fish : one would think by the vehemence of your lamentation you were in alarm for your *soul*." The angler, still grovelling on the ground, roused a little by this remonstrance, his mind entirely engrossed with the subject, heard but the last word. " Heh ! what, sir ! " he exclaimed

angrily, “a sole, sir! a sole! a sawmon peel ’s worth twenty soles!”

J. I hope some day to capture a salmon; I hear it is a mettlesome fish, and affords fine sport.

S. Truly, and there are some who say that the capture of a salmon will give you a distaste for trout-fishing, or “trouting,” as the Scotch term it; but, though a noble sport, it is, after all, a coarser kind of angling. Still, the rush of a salmon, when you have struck him, is tremendous. To hear the whirr of your reel, as he dashes up stream, running out fifty yards of your line, and then throwing repeated summersets, nearly as high as your head, would excite the most stolid angler that ever cast a fly.

J. I have no doubt of the sport exciting me. You must have perceived that the hooking of a small trout excites me so much that I am in danger of losing him by my precipitancy.

S. A fault to which the young angler is, I find, too prone. A very slight turn of the wrist is sufficient to fix the suicide ; then get a taut line as quick as possible. Remember, however, that in doing so you are not to pull your fish out of the water. I have seen old and practised anglers—men who could cast a fly with consummate skill—sometimes lose their fish by this rough treatment. Bear it constantly in mind, that unless you hook a trout through bone or cartilage, you are not sure of him until he lies panting on the greensward at your feet. The soft spongy membrane which lines the mouth of this fish, is so little tenacious and pulpy, that it is no marvel he so often breaks your hold ; so that, if you have not fixed the hook in a tougher part he has a chance of freeing himself.

J. True ; I shall endeavour to profit by this teaching, for which your practical knowledge so well qualifies you. I shall

love the country, and its quiet scenes withal, much the more for these rambles by the river-side. What a lovely sunset !

S. “ — Sweet even-tide,
When ruddy Phœbus gins to welke in west.”

J. I confess that the air of these solitudes is more bracing and soul-expanding than the murky atmosphere of London ; but I cannot forbear thinking that Winter must reign here in all his rigour, and then the meadows are no longer lovely.

S. And then new scenes await you ; the whole aspect of Nature is changed. The songsters of the grove are silent, but migratory birds abound. The snipe and the woodcock seek the marshes and the brook ; the fieldfare congregates on the hill side and mingles its note with that of the redwing ; yes,

“ When all around the wind does blow,
And coughing drowns the parson’s saw,
When birds sit brooding in the snow,
And Marian’s nose looks red and raw,”

there is still something to interest and delight those who love a country life. Ay, even then, I can sing with Heyrick :—

“ Sweet country life, to such unknown
Whose lives are others’, not their own ! ”

J. In fishing for trout in those rivers in which salmon are found, is there not some danger of your tackle being broken by fish of the latter description ?

S. Yes, and there are some ludicrous instances on record ; but there is much more power in a trout rod and trout tackle, from the hands of a good maker, than many anglers suppose. I heard a short time since a well-authenticated anecdote of a gentleman who, while trout-fishing in the river Teign, in Devonshire, hooked with a small dun-fly a magnificent salmon, which he played for upwards of an hour without exhausting the fish, being out alone, and destitute of help. At length a countryman approached, and the angler, perceiving that

he bore a hedge-bill, offered him half-a-crown to go into the stream and kill the fish, but the fellow, for some unknown reason, refused the offer, and went on his way. There was no alternative, therefore, but playing the fish for nearly an hour longer, when the angler had the satisfaction of seeing it turn up completely exhausted. The prize was secured, and found to weigh eighteen pounds !

J. Do you always advocate the use of a landing-net ?

S. There is something to be said *pro* and *con* as to its use. If the banks of the stream in which you are fishing are steep, there can be no doubt of its usefulness ; but if the shore is sloping, I do not hesitate to say that you will kill your fish in much less time without it, especially if you are alone. If your attendant is not really expert in the use of the landing-net, he is worse than useless. I have on several occa-

sions killed large trouts, and have attributed my success to the circumstance of my being alone. When alone, you may sometimes nearly exhaust your fish before you bring him very close to you,—a manifest advantage, as any one will confess who has witnessed the last convulsive struggle of a trout when the landing-net is brought near him;—nay, I have often known him to escape by the over eagerness of the lander.

Simon. Eez, zur, um wants a leetle patience a'ter a's hooked, if 'a happens to be a big un. Nothin' like patience, as owld Rachael Cark used to zay;—a body med do anything wi' patience, but 'a never could persuade her owld man zo, 'specially when 'a baked his breeches, poor owld zowl an hin!

S. What 's that Simon? We must hear that story.

Simon. Whoy, one night, poor owld Job Cark coomed off the downs drough wet to

his very skin, and 'a went straight off to bed. Rachael her 'ad been a bakin' in the daay time, and 'a put Job's leathern breeches in the oven to dry um. In the marnin', avore 'twas light, Job began to veel about vor his thengs, and missed the breeches. "Where be the breeches?" zays he; "where *be* my breeches, Rachael!" "Awh, in the oven." Away went Job a'ter um, but in a minnit 'a zengs out, "Massey haw! what in th' oruld ha' you done, Rachael! they be ael cockled up like a skin o' parch-ment! Oh Lard, oh lard, what zhall I do! Was ever a man zo plagued as I be?" "Patience, Job, patience," zays the owld body, "have a leetle patiënce. Remember your namezake, how *he* was caddled." "Ha! that's very true," zays Job; 'a had a nation deal to put up wi', that's zartin, but *his wife never baked his breeches!*"

S. A capital story, which should be incorporated with the next edition of the

“Miseries of Human Life.” Some thirty years ago leather breeches were worn generally by the farmers, who, at market, when reckoning up their accounts, took a pin from their sleeve, and scratched the accounts on their nether garments, worn as sleek and shining as an old oak table.

J. How the air swarms with insects ! The swallows must be gorged with them, yet they still prolong the chase.

S. They will soon give it up to the bat and the night-hawk. You may hear the latter in the twilight of yonder thicket already, in full cry after the moths which the evening is tempting forth. By the by, we are approaching the spot where an old acquaintance of mine lies. I’ll try him with the *cinnamon moth*, a tempting morsel to a large trout at this time of the day ; but I must be wary, for he is one of the cunningest fish in this stream, and has actually broken away from two or three

anglers of my acquaintance. He lies under the branches of that great elm tree, and the difficulty is to approach without his seeing you. Keep back awhile and I'll try him. Ha! I saw him rise at a fly which was passing over him. Now, line and rod be obedient, and he's mine. There! I told you so; he has taken the lure and gone down to his haunt. Steady, Simon, don't come too near. I feel him, and see, he runs up stream; but I'll turn him, and bring him down again.

J. What a plunge! Shade of Cotton, I hope your tackle is strong, or you'll lose him! Another summerset! He'll get off, surely!

S. Never fear. I have him clear of the weeds, and am now pretty sure of my prize: yet he still fights nobly and contends for life and liberty with the vigour of his tribe. Don't approach yet, you will only add to his consternation, and make

him renew his efforts to get loose. Wait till I get a shorter line. There, you see he grows faint; he rolls heavily on his side; his fins seem to beat the tide; he is spent, and you may now lift him out, Julian, but take care of my line.

J. What a noble trout! he is upwards of a foot and a half long. What do you estimate his weight to be?

S. About four pounds. He is a well-fed fish, with a back like a hog, and of a beautiful colour. Put him into Mr. Julian's pannier, Simon, and come on to "The Angler's Rest," where we'll have a tankard of spiced ale, a beverage which, as Father Walton would have said, is only to be drunk by honest men and anglers.

[*Exeunt.*



The parlour of the "Angler's Rest." SENEX,

JULIAN. *Enter hostess with the loving cup.*

Senex. There, take a draught of what our hostess has brewed for us, and tell me, what you think of it.

Julian. [*After a long protracted "pull" at the tankard.*] Ha! this is indeed a drink for a prince. You must tell me the secret of its confection.

S. That you shall know presently; but say, is it not an excellent draught for a thirsty and somewhat wearied man.

J. Not only meat and drink, but clothes, lodging, and washing to boot, as Paddy has it. Most cool and delicious;—but I long to know the secret of its brewing, for mine hostess was very quick in preparing it.

S. It is made thus: take two glasses of wine, one of port and one of sherry, two table-spoonfuls of moist sugar, a quarter of a nutmeg, and a sprinkle of ginger, fill up

with a pint of *mild* ale over a piece of well baked (but not burnt) toast. These are the proportions; and if you will make it with a *quart* of ale, you of course double the quantity of wine, &c. *Any* wine will answer the purpose, but if of two kinds, the better. It should stand a quarter of an hour before it is drunk, that the flavour of the sop may be duly imparted to it.

Hostess. I hope it's made to your liking, sir?

S. So good that we must have the tankard replenished, Mrs. Slater. [*Hostess curtseys, and retires with the empty tankard.*] The widow's late husband could cast a line well, and knew where to look for a trout as well as any angler in this part of the country. He was a famous man, too, for a pike, and helped much to clear the water of that voracious fish. That pike which you see in the glass-case over the mantelpiece, was captured by him

about five years since. It weighed eighteen pounds. The whole village was in an uproar ; old and young turned out to stare at the water-wolf, and many a good wife who had indulged in uncharitable suspicions of her neighbours, as to the disappearance of her young ducks and geese, saw who was more likely to have been the culprit.

J. Yes, I suppose the disappearance of goslings and ducklings may often be thus accounted for. [*Re-enter hostess with the replenished tankard, which she places on the table ; noise of singing without.*]

H. It had better stand a few minutes, sir. I hope the singing outside doesn't disturb you ?

S. Not at all, not at all. [*Exit hostess.*] By the by, Julian, this will be a good opportunity for you to hear one of our country ditties. There 's a fellow singing with the power of twenty parish clerks. [*Looking out of the window.*] Ho, Simon !

Simon. [*Without.*] Zur!

S. Ask one of your friends there to give us a song, and tell Mrs. Slater to give them half a gallon of beer for me.

Simon. Eez, zur; what 'oud 'e plaze to ha'? "The Harnet and the Bittle," or "Bowld Robin Hood," or "Owld Grumbleton!"

S. Oh, "Old Grumbleton," by all means; there 's a fine moral in it, Julian, and I beg you to give ear to it. "Owld Grumbleton,"
Simon.

Simon. Eez, zur. I'll ask Dannell Jarvis: he 've a got the best voice o' ael on um, and zengs the loudest.

S. Now, I pray you give heed to this ditty, Julian. There is something in it which I trust you will lay to heart.

J. I am all ears.

OLD GRUMBLETON.

Owld Grumbleton was a terrible Turk,
As I 've yeard people zay,
And 'a zwore in an hour a'd do mwore work
Than his wife wou'd do in a day :
" Wi' ael my heart," zays the good owld dame,
" I 'm agreeable, anyhow ;
Zo thee sha't bide at whoame to-day,
And I 'll gwo driv' the plough.

" But thee must veed the brindled zow,
And the leetle pegs in th' sty,
And thee must milk the tiny cow,
Or Tiney her 'll gwo dry ;
And thee must mind the hank o' yarn
As I spun yesterday ;
And thee must watch the speckled hen,
Or her 'll gwo lay astray :
And thee must zee to the dairy pans,
Or the crame 'll be spwoilt therein ;
And thee must mind to turn the malt
That 's dryin' in the kiln."

The owld 'oman tuk the whip in her hand,
And trudged to drive the plough ;
The owld man tuk the milking-pail,
And tackled un to the cow :

But Tiney winced, and Tiney hunched,
And Tiney cocked her nose,
And Tiney kicked the pail down,
And the milk run auver his hose.
And 'tis "Oh, Tiney!" and "Wo! Tiney!"
And "Drat th' cow, bide still!
If I milks zich a maggotty runt agen,
'T will be zore agin my will!"

And he vorgot the hank o' yarn,
And the puppy-dog stole it away;
And he vorgot the speckled hen,
And zo her layd astray:
A went to veed the hungry pegs
A-grunting in the sty,
A run his nose agin a pwoast,
And amwoast knock'd out his eye:
"A vine joke, my yead's broke!
A plague on the pegs and sty!
If they gets no vittles till Doomsday,
They 'll never be zarved by I."

A left the crame to stand in the churn,
And turnin' hizzelf about,
Lar' a massey haw! there stood the zow
A zlushin' in her snout!
A stoop'd to pick a swingein' stick,
To gie th' owld zow her hire;
Her run between his legs in a vright,
And drowed un into the vire.

“ Oh drat thee now, vor a plaguy zow,
A *zurprizin'* zow bist thee ;
Thy snout it doos mwore harm in an hour
Than I can mend in dree ! ”

In coomed th' owld 'oman a wringin' her hands,
And thus in haste her spoke ;
“ The vore hos lays on his back in the pond,
And the plough and stilts be broke ;
And 'tis ‘ O Dobbin ! my poor Dobbin ! ’
And What an owld vool was I !
If I wears the breeches vor arr'n agen,
I wishes as I med die ! ”

Owld Grumbleton zwore by the zun and the moon,
And ael the green laves on the tree,
If his wife 'ou'd but take to her gear agen
Her shou'd never be caddled by he.
And 'tis “ Oh zay no mwore, pray,
Vor I hates to be called a vool ;
But bustle to-night, and put ael thengs right,
And I 'll gie thee lave to rule ! ”

S. There, what do you think of that ?

J. Excellent ! a commentary on the trite proverb, “ *Cuique in sua arte credendum est.* ” I shall, as you advise, lay it to heart, in the event of my falling into the snare of Hymen some day. Your instructions in the

West Saxon dialect have enabled me to comprehend the song, and I must beg you to obtain me a copy of it.

S. I'll take care that you have it.

Simon. [*Without*] Will 'e plaze to ha' another, zur.

S. No, not to-night, Simon; we must be trudging homeward: it is growing dark. Look to your panniers. Give Mrs. Slater a brace of trouts, and follow us directly. Come along, Julian.

[*Exeunt.*

Twilight. The Meadows. SENEX, JULIAN;
SIMON *bringing up the rear.*

Julian. The air smells sweetly now the sun is down.

Senex. "The smell of a field which the Lord has blessed." The daisy and other flowers which turn to the sun, are closed, but the fragrant climbing plants in the hedge-

rows, teem with their perfume and drink the evening dew. The trouts and swallows have given up their hunting to the night-hawk and the bat, and thousands of beautiful insects fall before these new devourers. The wood-tick's note has commenced, and timid glow-worms venture forth to hold tryst upon the humid greensward. See, the rising moon is tinging the few light fleecy clouds swept by the gentle south wind along the horizon. Such a night had the blind poet in his mind's eye when he composed those beautiful lines:—

“ Now came still evening on, and twilight grey
Had in her sober livery all things clad :
Silence accompanied ; for beast and bird,
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests
Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale ;
She all night long her amorous descant sung ;
Silence was pleased : now glowed the firmament
With living sapphires ; Hesperus, that led
The starry host, rode brightest ; till the Moon,
Rising in clouded majesty at length,
Apparent queen, unveiled her peerless light ;
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.”

But see, what with chatting and reciting we have beguiled the time and made our walk a short one ; old Fitz's deep voice welcomes us, and we shall eat our supper with a relish which hunger alone can impart.

FIFTH DAY.

Thrice happy he, who, by some shady grove,
Far from the clamorous world, doth live his own ;
Though solitary, who is not alone,
But doth converse with that Eternal Love.
Oh, how more sweet is bird's harmonious moan,
Or the hoarse sobbings of the widow'd dove,
Than those smooth whisp'rings near a prince's throne,
Which good make doubtful, do the ill approve !
O, how more sweet is zephyr's wholesome breath,
And sighs, embalmed, which new-born flowers unfold,
Than that applause vain honour doth bequeath.

DRUMMOND.

FIFTH DAY.

The River-side. SENEX and JULIAN seated at their luncheon beneath a hawthorn bush. SIMON counts the fish they have taken.

Senex. Well, Simon, how many?

Simon. There 's five brace o' yourn, zur, and dree brace and a haalf o' good uns o' Measter Julian's.

S. Pretty good work, considering the brightness of the day.

Julian. You promised to discuss the relative advantage of fishing up or down stream.

S. I have heard anglers contend for either, but it appears to me to depend upon

circumstances. I think it of little use to fish up stream, unless the trout are taking the fly greedily. In that case the advantage is obvious, as shown by Mr. Penn, a practical angler, whose book you should possess yourself of. But if the fish are sluggish and not rising, you will find your throwing up stream fruitless.

J. If they are not rising I fancy it will be but dull sport.

S. Not so; I have sometimes taken fine fish when even the smallest trout would not rise. For instance, when the May-fly is ascending the stalks of the flags, and not yet rising in the air, the artificial May-fly *under water*, is a deadly lure. I have found this repeatedly, and taken some of the largest fish in the stream, who have seized the fly under water, when they would not regard it on the surface.

J. I have observed that to-day my

fish took the fly after it had sunk beneath the surface. It appears to me that there is almost as much art in managing your fly when *in* the water as in casting it upon the surface.

S. Assuredly ; I have known some anglers who never made a good cast, yet succeed, because they are careful after the fly has sunk ; being mindful not to drag the lure roughly through the water when preparing for a fresh throw. It is well known, too, that a trout in a swift running stream will often follow and seize the fly just as it arrives at the bank, so that unless you can see the fish, you are often in ignorance whether he is after what you offer him ;—but give me a horn of ale, and try a piece of that gammon, which you will find excellent.

J. Notwithstanding the heat I have the appetite of a ploughman. Oh, ye sons of luxury and dissipation, who are now

discussing a maudlin breakfast in town, come hither !

S. See ! as the heat increases, the May-fly and the dragon-fly ascend the flags and hoist sail : poor feeble trembling things, vibrating their flaccid wings, and looking forth upon a new world, while their ceremonies crackle in the sun and drop from their fragile bodies — a type of the soul's appearance after its final conflict with the grim enemy ! Look how some, more lusty than their fellows, soar into the air and commence their wanton mazes. The alder-fly too, encouraged by the warmth, spreads his dusky membranous wings, and joins in the insect revel.

J. I see also some insects shaped like the May-fly, but infinitely smaller.

S. They are the "duns," which continue from early spring down to the close of the season, though the colour of their bodies varies. These flies are well imitated and

prove a good lure when the fish are shy and the water very clear and low.

J. How infinitely our sport is to be preferred before "bottom fishing."

S. For my part I cannot now tolerate fishing with a float, and yet I confess that that kind of angling, when the barbel are on the feed, in very deep and clear water, such as the Thames at Twickenham or Richmond, is far from despicable sport, and may afford great delight to those who cannot fish with the fly. A good perch, too, is a powerful and resolute fish, a free biter, and rarely tries your patience.

J. I never hear of perch-fishing without thinking of a contrivance of a cockney-angler who used to fish in one of the canals in the neighbourhood of London. The old fellow having marked a good swim of perch, forthwith prepared a large glass bottle, which he filled with water, and then introduced a handful of live Thames shrimps. The

bottle being carefully stopped, was then let down by a string to the bottom of the canal, and was soon surrounded by all the perch in the neighbourhood, who finding they could not assail the imprisoned shrimps, swam round and round the outside, rubbing their snouts against the glass, like hungry *gamins* at the steamy windows of a cook's shop. While thus engaged, the angler let down a shrimp on a hook by the side of the glass, and you may be sure he was not long without a bite.

S. An excellent contrivance, and certainly much to be preferred to the many abominations composed for "ground bait," and used by some people in bottom fishing. These preparations appear to be devised chiefly that they may rival in filthiness the recipes of the old pharmacopœias, in which every imaginable nastiness may be found. But see, there is a breeze springing up which curls the water. On with a "soldier

palmer," or a "golden palmer," if you would rather, and I promise you rare sport.

J. I adopt your advice, and have a soldier palmer for "stretcher," and a golden palmer for "bob."

S. Well chosen, and now follow me, and I warrant you we shall have sport. Come along, Simon. [Exeunt.

Another part of the river. SENEX, JULIAN,
SIMON PARADICE.

Senex. Here lie some of the best trouts in the river when the weather is warm. The breeze so ruffles the surface that they cannot perceive you, or they would fly up the stream. Now, cast your fly just over that stone.

Julian. There!—ha! I missed him!—he's a large fish.

S. Try again: you are not likely to have frightened him while this wind is blowing.

You have him ! Up with your rod, and shorten line. Quick, or he 'll gain that patch of weeds. So, that 's right,—he 's yours ; lead him gently to the side and exhaust him. Give me the landing-net, Simon. No ! another plunge, and another.

J. Shall I give him a little line ? I hope my tackle will hold him. My line twangs like a bow-string !

S. Not an inch, but give the top of your rod free play. He grows weak now and turns on his side : I can land him. There ! a fine fish, twenty inches at least ! See, by pressing him I make him disgorge three minnows, and yet he clutched at your fly greedily.

J. I thought it was the practice, with so large a fish, to give out more line.

S. It may be with some anglers, but I have taken larger fish, and never returned an inch of line after I had wound up. I have always thought that the hazard is

greater when the line is the least slack than when short;—taking care, however, never to pull your fish, which may be hooked slightly, in which case you infallibly lose him. Come, clear your line and try again. Another!—shorten line, and keep him clear of that stone. Well done! you have him now at advantage. He grows weak—bring him to the side—there! What think you of this spot?

J. Beautiful! I never saw a sweeter stream in the south of England. What a shoal of minnows in the pool behind that great stone.

S. They are there to avoid the trouts which are now on the shallows. A friend, on whose veracity I can implicitly rely, told me, that some years since, he was one day fishing in Hertfordshire, when, as he sat by the river-side changing his flies, he beheld a concourse of these beautiful little fishes apparently in deep council.

They formed a very perfect circle of about three feet in diameter, each fish having his head turned inwards. They remained thus grouped and perfectly immovable, except their fins, but if any strange minnow ventured near them, two or three of the body moved out of the circle and chased it away, returning and falling in again with the greatest precision. . How such creatures can commune with each other I leave for the consideration of the naturalist;—they, indeed, have “neither speech nor language,” and yet truly there must exist the most perfect intelligence among them.

J. It is, after all, not more wonderful than the instinct with which Providence has endowed many creatures of inferior organization. Fishes, I believe, are destitute of natural affection.

S. To all appearance they are, but then we know so little of their habits. They appear, too, to be insensible to pain, or at

least to be less affected by it than most creatures.

J. I have heard many anecdotes of their voracity, and of their insensibility to corporal suffering after being hooked; their struggles then, which so horrify humane people, would appear to be rather the effect of their efforts to get away than the writhing under torture.

S. You will find it difficult to persuade many people of that, and I have no inclination to debate the matter, but I am well acquainted with an angler who once unintentionally caught a fish, and a trout too, with its own eye!

J. Pardon my incredulity, but I was not prepared for such a fact as that!

S. I do not ask you to believe it, but I have perfect confidence in the veracity of my friend, who assured me that having hooked the fish foul, and torn out its eye, he threw again, and the same trout seized

it and was captured. It is well known that a small trout is a tempting bait for a large one; and this is notoriously the case with pike, who prefer their own young to any other fish. Smelts, too, are most readily taken with pieces of their own kind. Taking into account the comparative insensibility to pain of these creatures, with the habit of fish in preying upon their own species, the adventure of my friend appears the less incredible. But what are you watching so attentively?

J. I was observing the robin on that withered branch yonder: he has been regarding our doings apparently with great attention for the last ten minutes, and seems to look on with more than brute intelligence.

S. It is a characteristic of that interesting bird which has made him such a favourite with us country folk. Walk down your garden, and take a seat in your summer-

house, and, in less than five minutes, Robin pops his head in at the door and peers at you inquisitively. Ramble into the thickest wood or coppice, and seat yourself on some moss-covered bank, and the redbreast confronts you directly. Scarcely has the gardener turned a spadeful of earth when this "familiar peast to man" comes a-leasing for the worms thus laid bare, perching so close that he might be taken with the hand. He who wrote the favourite ballad of "The Babes in the Wood," was fully aware of the habits of this pert and familiar bird. Yes, Robin has often shared the simple meal of the anchorite and the furtive repast of the hunter and the outlawed man, when the wild wood afforded the only refuge from tyranny and oppression.

J. And yet I believe he has a bad character, quarrelling and fighting with his kind, and even with the members of his own household, on the most trifling occasions?

S. I cannot deny it: his pugnacity is notorious, and it is well known that he often cuffs his parents or his brothers soundly — a very unamiable trait on which poets have charitably been silent. A friend of mine sometimes amuses himself by setting two robins to fight, which he effects in this manner. Perceiving a single robin in his garden he soon brings a second to the spot by tapping sharply with the edge of one shilling on the surface of another, and thus imitating the abrupt, pert, petulant note of the bird itself. The note of defiance is quickly responded to, and a battle invariably ensues. Still Robin will continue a favourite with the countryman, and the couplet

“The robin redbreast and the wren
Are God Almighty’s cock and hen,”

be recited as long as the dialect I have attempted to illustrate shall be known and spoken.

J. What could have been the origin of that strange rhyme?

S. I am somewhat puzzled to know why the wren is thus coupled with the robin, unless it be that the tiny songster, like the redbreast, haunts gardens and homesteads, where its shrill pipe may be heard even in winter time if the weather be not frosty. Perhaps the peculiar cock of the wren's tail might have suggested the conceit of a diminutive hen, it being very unlike that of other small birds, and more resembling the tail of a gallinaceous fowl. The wren never enters houses like the robin, and does not, therefore, claim the protection which the latter still obtains, though I fear the harmless superstition is already assailed by the stride of "education." Pope, in his day, had some misgivings on this head, for he says:—

"The robin redbreast, till of late, had rest,
And children sacred held a martin's nest."

J. What could have given rise to the story of the robin covering the dead bodies of human creatures?

S. It may be traced, perhaps, to the popular ballad, but it is possible that the simple rhyme embalms an ancient superstition. In an old play the wren is made to join in this pious office:—

“ Call for the robin redbreast and the wren
Since o’er shady groves they hover,
And with leaves and flow’rs do cover
The friendless bodies of unburied men.”

The fondness of the robin for his summer haunts is well described in these lines:—

“ Some redbreasts love amid the deepest groves
Retired to pass the summer days. Their song
Among the birchen boughs, with sweetest fall
Is warbled, pausing, then resumed more sweet,
More sad, that to an ear grown fanciful,
The babes, the wood, the men, rise in review,
And robin still repeats the tragic line.”

—But it is in the winter that robin’s familiarity increases. When the wind whistles sharply through the leafless thicket, and the

snow covers the frost-bound earth, the red-breast boldly enters the house and finds no enemy but the cat; fearlessly perching at length on your very chair back, and almost living within doors. He loves, too, a draught of milk, and often invades the dairy, where he sometimes tumbles into the leads and is drowned.

J. Some time since, the congregation in the cathedral church of Canterbury were daily visited by a robin, one of a pair which had taken up their abode in some carved capital of the sacred pile. I was once or twice witness of this myself. The little creature, as soon as the tones of the organ were heard, descended, and actually perching on the choristers' desks, peered in their faces, and joined its shrill note with theirs. The sight at first provoked a smile, but after a time, as the service proceeded, and the *alto* of the feathered intruder mingled with the voices of the choristers, and re-

sounded audibly above the loudest notes of the organ, the scene became inexpressibly affecting.

S. Another proof of the familiarity of this bird, which will ever be a favourite with man.

Simon. I thenks there's a good trout or two in owld Speck's meadow, zur. Will 'e try?

S. Ay, we'll go thither at once, Simon. Did you tell Speck that I wish to see him?

Simon. Eez, zur.

S. What did he say?

Simon. Haw! a laafed and zed as how a'd come, but 'twas o' no use;—ye couldn't get any more rent out o' he;—'twas like puttin' a crupper on a twoad.

S. Why so, Simon?

Simon. 'Cos a twoad 'ant got no tayl, zur! I do thenk a's the stingiest owld wosbird in the 'orld. Last winter a was

buildin' a cow-hus, and because a wouldn't buy hair to mix wi' the marter, a shaved his donkey so close that the poor beayst was pretty nigh killed wi' the cawld !

S. There's a lesson in thrift for you, Julian ! Come, let us go and try the stream in my tenant's meadow. [*Exeunt.*

Another part of the stream. *SENEX,*
JULIAN, SIMON PARADICE.

Senex. There, cast your fly just under that high bank opposite.

Julian. Ha ! I missed him !

S. Yes, and by your own precipitancy. The fish is greedy enough, but you did not give him time.

J. I have read that you should be prepared to strike the moment he rises.

S. And rightly so, if you were fishing in the rapid streams of Derbyshire or Westmoreland, where, if you do not strike instanter, the fish winds your foot-line round

some great stone, and frees himself ere you can count two ; but in these south country streams, which run sluggishly, you should not strike until the fish has turned himself. A good fish will invariably hook himself on your simply raising the point of your rod, and this I always do, so that I am in less danger of losing him by tearing out my hold in "striking." Of course you will lose no time in getting your rod erect, or in "giving the fish the but," as it is significantly termed, when he proves mettlesome. Try again. There 's a rise under that alder bush.

J. I have him, and perceive you are right : I did not raise the rod until I counted three, when the tension of my line told me that he was well hooked. Out with him, Simon.

Simon. A's a good pound and a haaf, zur.

S. Let us proceed a little higher up

the stream, where the current is stronger; the fish that haunt the rapids are twice as good as those in stiller water, and infinitely more vigorous.

J. You must be well acquainted with these streams.

S. Yes, and with many others in this part of England:—

“—— fondly I pursued,
Even when a child, the streams—unheard, unseen.

* * * * *

Nor have I tracked their course for scanty gains;
They taught me random cares and truant joys,
That shield from mischief and preserve from stains
Vague minds.”

—I often find myself musing at particular spots which I was wont to haunt in my childhood with nothing to disturb my reveries, but the joyous note of the fly-hunting wagtail as it bounds from patch to patch of bright weeds, or the startled cry of the moor-hen, or the kingfisher skimming along the sedgy bank of the stream, and in its turn flushing

the solitary snipe which hurries away to some more secure retreat. Out on the man, I say, who finds *all* his pleasure in *destroying* ! The river-side rambling of the fly-fisher affords more real enjoyment to a contemplative mind than all other sports of the field.

J. You are right ; though other sports have their interest and their excitement, none yields such a quiet pleasure as ours ; none furnishes such opportunities for the study of Nature. I have seen to-day a dozen nooks which I would fain transfer to my sketch-book.

S. Very pleasant are such memorials of a fishing ramble ; but we still want the accessories, — the voices of birds, the hum of insects, the ripple of the pebbly stream, and the sound most grateful to the angler's ear, the plash of the greedy trout as he launches at the struggling fly borne on the eddying current ; while high over head,

a speck in the blue ether, the lark is caroling blithely, and in the neighbouring fields are heard the ploughboy's whistle, the jangle of the traces, and the crack of the carter's whip, startling the feathered foragers from the fresh turned clods:—these are beyond the most cunning limner's art.

J. Still, as we contemplate a well-executed sketch, the mind supplies the accessories you have enumerated with such *gusto*.

S. I think you will find a trout near the roots of that pollard oak, but take care of the thorn that overhangs the water.

J. It's a dangerous cast:—I'll cede it to you.

S. Very well then; stand aside. Ha! I have hooked a couple!

J. I'm glad they are in your hands, for I should have found one of them sufficient. How they plunge in different directions like a couple of hounds in the leash,

as if they were conscious that they had you at disadvantage.

S. They begin now, however, to show symptoms of distress, but they are not landed yet.—Bring the net, Simon. No, they are not yet subdued.

Simon. Oon on um zims mwore cam than t'other; — but it's ael up wi'm now.

S. Out with 'em! Poor rogues, they fought well for their freedom.

J. Do you often kill such a brace at once?

S. No, not such a brace as this; but, when trout are feeding greedily, it is no very uncommon event to find both your flies seized at the same time; though one of them is generally taken by a small fish.

J. On these occasions our chief hope is in good tackle.

S. I am no advocate for *very* light

tackle, although, at times this is a matter of the first importance,—because of possible contingencies. A friend of mine, some years since, while fly-fishing in the Foy in Cornwall, hooked a heavy fish in a rapid stream, and played it for some seconds, in much doubt as to what he had hold of. At last, to his great surprise, he discovered it was an *eel* which he had harpooned in the tail. After a struggle of some minutes, with the assistance of his companion, he landed his prize, weighing upwards of two pounds.

J. A troublesome acquaintance at the end of a fly-rod.

S. Troublesome at the end of any rod, but especially so in a swift stream.—Are there any pike in Speck's pond, Simon?

Simon. Eez, zur, a veaw. Th' owld genelman vound a strange vish there oon marnin' laast Michaelmas.

S. What was that?

Simon. Haw, a zeed a vish under the water as zimd to ha' two tayls, oon at each ind an hin, a cou'dn't mak't out no how, zo, as the theng was quite dead, they got un out wi a rake, and then um vound 'twas a pike o' zix pounds that had tried to zwallur a carp o' dree pounds, and the carp had stuck in his droat and choked un. I zeed um bwoth jist as they was tuk out.

J. I have heard two or three similar stories, but in each instance the pike had swallowed one of its own species. I believe they are often choked in this way. I have somewhere heard or read of a large pike swallowing the head of a swan, and in like manner falling a victim to his rashness.

S. About twenty years back a dead pike was taken ont of a pond in the adjoining parish, which, in attempting to swallow a moor-hen, had choked itself. I can believe anything of the voracity of this fish,

who is truly the wolf of the waters, and, if not kept under, will soon devastate a trout stream.

J. The privations which fish must sometimes endure doubtless make the pike occasionally very rash in his craving for food.

S. Yes, I believe with Simon, that when pressed by hunger nothing comes amiss to them. — But in the next field is the source of the stream. We can go through this gap. Let us approach softly, for a large fish often lies under the hollow roots of that thorn tree. Give me my spinning rod, Simon.—There ! I told you so ! Down he goes sulkily, — a good three pounds, if I ever had a fish in hand. Now he rises to the top, and vents his indignation by a violent shake or two, but it's of little use striving against such tackle. Lift him out, Simon.—After all, it's coarse fishing with the minnow, and only justifiable in places

such as these, when the fly cannot be used without the risk of being *hitched*.— *Aut musca aut nihil* is my motto, and I rarely resort to other means.

J. What a charming spot !

S. I thought you would be pleased with it. Let us sit down beneath the shade of this bush, and, as you love the picturesque, indulge your fancy awhile.

“ Salve, Fons ignote ortu, sacer, alme, perennis,
Vitree, glauce, profunde, sonore, illimis, opace ! ”

Here the Masters of the World may have celebrated their *Fontinalia* : here, perhaps, the altar was raised

NYMPHIS ET FONTIBVS SACRVM.

and the most poetical of all the rites of polytheism were celebrated by men ignorant



of Him “who turned the hard rock into a standing water, and the flint stone into a springing well:” here, in after-ages, when priestcraft was all potent, the sick man resorted and drank of the stream, which a new faith had hallowed and adopted.

J. I can imagine all. These luxuriant thorns, whose branches shade it from the sun, and whose roots are nourished by the spring, are of great age.

S. Yes, I remember them these thirty-five years and more, and they appear unaltered: it is very difficult to ascertain the age of such trees. These are my especial favourites, for, as I have before observed, they are beautiful even in winter. I do not marvel that they were cherished by our Saxon forefathers, or that in these days, when land is cleared of underwood, immunity is granted to “hollies and thorns.”

J. I remember that Asser, in his Life

of the Great Alfred, tells us how, in the memorable battle of Ashendun, the fight raged fiercest around one of these solitary thorn trees—*unica spinosa arbor*.

S. Yes, and such a tree may have sheltered the Royal fugitive when, parted from his friends and adherents, he traversed the most unfrequented tracts, hoping and trusting that a brighter hour awaited his desponding countrymen.

J. I confess, the scenes of the last five days have wrought a great change in me;—I could almost find it in my heart to take to a country life.

S. If such thoughts possess you now, you will find them gaining firmer hold of you in advancing life. When otherwise disposed, I often found myself, amidst the din of the busiest thoroughfares of London, repeating the lines of Marvel:

“Climb at court for me who will
Tottering favour’s pinnacle ;—

All I wish is to lie still,
Settled in some secret nest.
In calm leisure let me rest,
And, far off the public stage,
Pass away my silent age.
Thus, when without noise, unknown,
I have lived out all my span,
I shall die without a groan
An old honest countryman."

I hold with the ancient, "*Vita rustica sine dubitatione, proxima et quasi consanguinea sapientiæ.*"—It was this which, in old times, led the wisest and the best to abandon the busy world, its strifes and jealousies, to enjoy the "dry morsel and quiet."

"Tranquillity, thou better name
Than all the family of Fame !"

But do not misunderstand me ; I abhor the misanthrope who lives for himself alone ; and, if I thought that by leading a country life, I was denied the opportunity of being useful to my fellow-man, I would abandon my favourite haunts, and betake me to busier scenes. Come, I will now lead you to a

little tributary stream which washes the roots of the old pollard-willows in yonder paddock.

J. I am ready, and cannot follow a better teacher ;—lead on. [*Exeunt.*

SIXTH DAY.

Wenn ich so auf mein Leben schau,
Erwägend, wie's doch sei gekommen,
Das Waldesgrün und Himmelsblau,
Und Morgenroth und Abendthau
Mir mehr als Rang und Mammon frommen.

FR. KIND.

SIXTH DAY.

*A Green Lane leading to the meadows. SENEX,
JULIAN. SIMON PARADICE following.*

Senex. I HAVE brought you a roundabout way this morning for the purpose of calling on the worthy people we have just left ; but it is a pleasant walk, and you will not find it irksome.

Julian. Nay, I am delighted both with the neighbourhood and with your friends, who appear to be superior to the majority of their class.

S. Their class, like many others in human society, is marked by various shades of difference. With many educated people

the farmer is considered a boor ; and so, indeed, he often is, but there are some, and not a few, singular exceptions. I am sometimes reminded of the shrewd remark of Fuller—"The good yeoman is a gentleman in ore whom the next generation may see refined ; and is the wax, capable of a gentle impression when the prince shall stamp it." Many of these men have better and less dubious pedigrees than thousands of those who affect to despise them. You may test this at the College of Arms, any day you please, by examining the genealogy of a respectable yeoman family. In such men we have the Saxon blood with the least possible alloy ; and it is no uncommon thing to find them occupying the soil which their forefathers have tilled from the days of the Confessor. Good breeding is not always inherent, while it may be found among some in the humblest walks of life.

J. Yes, I can readily believe that good

breeding has existed in all ages, even when manners were rude, and coarse and grossly obscene jests won favour at the Courts of Kings;—and yet I am puzzled to know how Modesty veiled her head, or stopped her ears, when within sight or hearing of the filthy buffooneries of the Middle Ages. The bare recital of the terms of some of our ancient tenures would be an outrage upon common decency now-a-days.

S. “To the pure all things are pure.” In later times, when the royal palace of Whitehall was a sty of impurity, men, and women too, passed in and out without contamination,—shocked at what they saw and heard, abhorring and pitying, but unpolluted. That good breeding and gentle deportment were not unknown in the Middle Ages we learn from that faithful chronicler of manners Geoffrey Chaucer: his Knight had led the hard and stormy life of a soldier, had fought in fifteen pitched battles, and had

thrice overthrown his enemy in the lists,
yet

—— “though that he was worthy he was wise,
And of his port as meke as is a mayde.”

Then what a charming picture of a true
gentlewoman of those days is his Prioress:—

“At mete was she wel ytaught withalle
She lette no morsel from hire lippes falle,
Ne wette hire fingres in hire sauce depe
Wel coude she carie a morsel, and wel kepe,
Thatte no droppe ne fell upon hire brest.
In curtesie was set ful muche hire lest.
Hire over lippe wiped she so clene,
That in hire cuppe was no ferthing sene
Of grese, when she dronken hadde hire draught.”

This delicacy at meals is the more conspicuous when it is remembered that in those days the ladies had to convey their food to their mouths on the points of their knives!

The morning I fear, though dense, is too calm for fishing: we require a breeze for that part of the stream to which we are going.

J. Never mind, I am enjoying this delightful walk: the last night's rain has

made every thing look fresh and vivified.
What a peculiar odour pervades the air.

S. It is the trees in this elder hedge.

J. I was not aware that the scent of the elder was so powerful.

S. Nor are the rustics hereabouts now aware why their forefathers planted the elder round their gardens. In Scotland, north of the Grampians, I believe it is well known to be noxious to vermin of the snail and caterpillar kind, and therefore they water their gardens with water in which the leaves of this tree have been steeped. The practice was doubtless once common in England; and thus, in *Piers Ploughman*, Judas is said to have hanged himself, on an elder, it being doubtless considered fitter than all the trees of the forest for such a delinquent:

“Judas he japed
With Jewen silver
And sithen on an *eller*
Hanged himself.”

The elder was much venerated by our Anglo-Saxon (or Old English, as Camden more properly styles them) forefathers. The canons of Edgar enumerate and denounce the practice of several kinds of spells, and among them those with "elders and other trees." The elder is however, in our days, prized for certain virtues, and its vinegar is an excellent element in sauce for any kind of freshwater fish. I will give you the recipe for its use before you leave me.

J. Your illustrations tempt me much to take up the subject of provincialisms; though I fear, from my want of practical knowledge, I shall make but little progress; yet to know something more of our ancient tongue is within the reach of every educated man.

S. You will find such reading give a zest to your day's ramble in the country. It is only the half-educated who affect to despise the language of the village clown.

J. I already perceive that although to a polished ear their speech is uncouth, it is often significant and expressive.

S. Some of their phrases are to this hour pure Saxon. There is one especially which may be constantly heard even in the streets of London. I allude to the carter's command to his team, "ga ute!"

J. I have heard it often.

S. And so must thousands, daily, without suspecting that Alfred and Beda could not have uttered purer Saxon!

J. Indeed! What is its literal signification?

S. Go out, or go outwards! that is, move away from the driver. In the Anglo-Saxon Gospels our Lord's command to Lazarus in the tomb, is in these very words—"Lazarus, ga ute!" Again, at plough, they say to the team, when, after turning, the horses have fallen into the right line "thereright," a word which occurs very

often in the Anglo Saxon version of the Gospels, and which in ours is always represented by the word "straightway." If they speak of a scanty crop of corn they say "a bad *rip* there," and we find in A. S. "micel *rip* and feawa *wyrta*" (Matt. ix. 37): four out of the five words of this sentence are still retained by our rural population. They use the phrase "most in deal" for "generally, or for the most part," which is also the Anglo Saxon form "*mæst dæl*." But I am wearying you with these proofs of the antiquity of the language spoken by my rustic neighbours.

J. By no means, I perceive, that you have taken possession of tenable ground, and I promise you that by the time we meet again I will know more of the language you quote from.

S. There are also many words which by the rustics are pronounced as their forefathers and ours evidently pronounced them ;

take for example “climb,” a word in which the vowel is sounded like *i* in *him*. Spenser thus uses it, and, at a later period, George Withers, a Hampshire man, pronounced it in like manner, as we may suppose by the lines :—

“He’s a fool that basely dallies
Where each peasant mates with him ;
Shall I haunt the thronged valleys,
When there’s noble hills to climb !”

But the subject cannot be discussed in a walk like this. See, the hills are clearing, and the haze of morning is dispersing.

“Ye mists and exhalations that now rise
From hill or steamy lake, dusky or grey,
Till the sun paints your fleecy skirts with gold,
In honour to the world’s great Author rise.
Whether to deck with clouds the uncoloured sky,
Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers ;
Rising or falling, still advance His praise.”

People may descant in raptures on those sunny climes where a single cloud is sometimes not seen for weeks together, but give me, with all its occasional discomforts, the

atmosphere of my own land. I love to see the flying showers which so often visit us at this season of the year, and watch the fantastic shapes and motions of the ever-changing clouds heightening the effect of Nature's panorama.

J. But do you not, at times, find the hours pass heavily in your retreat?

S. Never: when the weather absolutely defies me to walk abroad, I have abundance of occupation within doors; good companions who have cheered me in hours of sadness and monitors even for the grey head. Like Horace, I once sighed:—

“O Rus, quando ego te aspiciam?”

but not that I might doze away my life in dreamy apathy and uselessness,—I was always an enemy to—

“The minstre and the norice unto vices
Which that men clepe in English idelnesse;”

nor that I might altogether shun the society

of my fellow-men. It has been well remarked that solitude reigns supreme in the greatest cities, "for a crowd is not company, and faces are but a gallery of pictures, and talk but a tinkling cymbal where there is no love."

J. This love of a country life is after all, I believe, inherent, and scarcely to be acquired.

S. Perhaps you are right; in my case it is so, for my father loved the country as I do, and like me was an angler. An old farmer, one of my neighbours, says, "Talk o' music, there's nothing like two flails and a cuckoo!" Now, though I am not quite of the same mind, I confess, that sounds like those are to me sweet music.

"Nor rural sights alone, but rural sounds,
Exhilarate the spirit, and restore
The tone of languid Nature."

The notes which come from barn and mill have a peculiar charm for my ear. Yes, even

when a boy, long ere I had the strength to cast
a fly,

“ I loved the brimming wave that swam
Through quiet meadows round the mill,
The sleepy pool above the dam,
The pool beneath it never still,
The meal sacks on the whitened floor,
The dark round of the dripping wheel,
The very air about the door
Made misty with the floating meal.”

But here is our village Church. Is not this
a quiet spot,—good anchorage for a storm-
tossed spirit ?

J. Such nooks are only to be seen in
England : I know of nothing to compare
with them.

S. This is one of my most favourite
spots. When a younger man I once caught
myself, while lounging here, uttering thoughts
which ran somewhat in this strain :—

When I am dead let me not buried lie
Where the world's hubbub sounds continually ;
No funeral pomp, no marble tomb I crave,
A simple slab alone shall mark my grave ;
Robin's sweet note my only dirge shall be,
My epitaph the good man's memory.



J. In the grave all rest alike, but still our fancy lingers on such scenes as these, and I doubt if ever they are effaced from our memories.

S. Never: yet they who lie here were “men of like passions with ourselves.” Love, jealousy, malice, avarice, ay even ambition, once disquieted the clay on which we tread. But there are some who died in well-grounded hope, who will appear at the resurrection of the just,—who lived in charity with all, and died leaving behind them the odour of a good name. It is painful to contrast their lives with those of the debauched and vicious whom death has also levelled. There is the memorial of one whose epitaph may be found in the late Vicar’s register—“potator prodigus!” The worthy old man,—a priest whom Chaucer or Herbert might have loved,—was a faithful chronicler of the virtues and the vices of his flock. I never see that grave without

thinking of the quaint, but somewhat coarse rhyming admonition which the rustics sing to the note of the blackbird :—

“ Barnaby, Barnaby take for a warning,
Be no more dry, nor drunk of a morning ;
Barnaby, Barnaby lies in his grave,
All the churchyard doth stink of a knave ! ”

It always recurs to my memory when the Spring returns and the ousel's note is heard loudest in brake and bush. There, too, is the memorial of one with whom I have often fished these streams ; — one who, though young, was yet not unprepared, the hope and pride of his fond parents.—“ How, now, foolish rheum ! ”—regret is vain and profitless :—

“ Whom the gods love die young,” was said of yore,
And many deaths do they escape by this :
The death of friends, and that which slays even more—
The death of friendship, love, youth, all that is,
Except mere breath ; and since the silent shore
Awaits at last even those whom longest miss
The old archer's shafts, perhaps the early grave,
Which men weep over may be meant to save ! ”

Come let me show you the inside of this pretty Church.

The interior of the Church. SENEX and
JULIAN.

Julian. This font is curious. What is the meaning of those quaint armed figures?

Senex. Antiquaries suppose them to represent the struggle between the good and the evil principle; but it is sometimes difficult to interpret the symbolism of the period to which this font belongs.

J. There is the *fish*, which is, I believe, the early Christian symbol. When was this first used?

S. There can be, I think, little doubt of its having been adopted in the earliest days of Christianity. The Greek word ΙΧΘΥΣ, as you know, signifies a fish, and I have sometimes seen these letters en-

graved on the figure of a fish on ancient gems.

J. They are the initials of the words Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς Θεοῦ Υἱὸς Σωτήρ. When could this have been devised?

S. Doubtless in the days of fierce persecution, when its significance was not comprehended by the Pagan masters of the world,—perhaps earlier than the Antonines. We have the best assurance that it was known in the reign of Severus. If you turn to Tertullian's discourse on baptism you will find at the very commencement a passage in which the word ἰχθῦν is used in a way which shows that the writer must have been well aware of its application by the Christians of his day.

J. This church contains the usual heterogeneous array of monuments! There is one which must have cost a small fortune. Hope and Charity gathered around the bed of a dying woman, the first holding in her

taper fingers the anchor of a frigate ! Then the inscription,—hyper-florid eulogy ! oh trite puerility ! How applicable is the measured sarcasm of the poet :

“ Can storied urn, or animated bust,
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath ?
Can Honour’s voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flattery sooth the dull cold ear of Death ?”

One is reminded, too, of the sneer of the essayist : “ What a blessing it must have been to have lived in the lady’s time !”

S. I could almost find it in my heart to chime in with you, and am only restrained by the sanctity of the place, and the thought that human weakness is as manifest in it as the bad taste which dictated such a memorial. I regret to find that a curious sepulchral brass has disappeared, for I wished you to see it. These things have suffered from other spoilers besides those of the days of Cavalier and Roundhead, on whom *all* the mischief is unjustly laid, much

as they are to blame. The actual criminals are more frequently a set of people who assume and prostitute the honoured name of Antiquary, but who in reality are mere relic-mongers and relic-hoarders.

J. Do you really believe that to be the case in this instance, and that one of these gentry has paid your Church a visit ?

S. I have little doubt of it : if the brass has not been removed by his hands, he has perhaps bribed the sexton to do it, which makes his crime the greater.

J. I believe there are instances of the wilful destruction and mutilation of monuments, and parish registers, with a view to remove evidence which might be produced in our Law Courts.

S. It is too true. I am acquainted with a case in another county, which for audacious wickedness is without parallel. But let us turn from a theme so degrading to human nature. How dulled is the pride

of old houses in these faded and defaced escutcheons! *Gules* has lost its florid hue. *Azure* no longer looks ethereal. *Sable* has rusted like an old and laid up blade. *Or* glitters in patches only, a fit type of the tinsel of this life — “*bracteata felicitas!*” There is something inexpressibly solemn in the contemplation of “this pomp and circumstance” on the very margin of the grave. What will it avail in the great account, when plumes and shaven crowns, the warrior and the monk, the simple ploughman and the sage, the high-born beauty and the lowly country wench, shall be regarded without distinction; — when heraldry shall cover no foul spot, and that *red hand*, that right red hand, — the boast and ornament of many a proud escutcheon, — shall be held tremblingly up to plead before the judge of all the world!

[SIMON enters.]

Simon. Haw, if ye plaze, zur, it 's o' no use gwain to the river this marnin': Measter Speck's began to cut the weeds.

S. How do you know that?

Simon. Dannell Jarvis has jist gone by and zays he's a gwain to help un.

J. Will not this put an end to our sport?

S. It certainly will, and we may as well return at once. It would, however, have become Master Speck better if he had acquainted me with his intention, for I should have been much annoyed if this had been your first instead of your last day; but your true Angler is proof against disappointments and uncertainties, and I hope you will not suffer this to vex you.

J. Not at all; it comes, perhaps, opportunely, since it may help to wean me for a little time from a sport of which I may grow too fond. You know, too, that I must return to town to-day.

S. I do, and therefore I do not press you to stay longer, holding to the maxim,

Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest,

though I hope soon to see you again. We can return by a much shorter way across these meadows. [*They quit the Church.*] Remember, when you have leisure, to pay your friend, the old Angler, another visit, and in the interval make yourself acquainted with that primitive tongue on which our modern English is based.

J. You may rest assured of my doing so, and of my coming again the very first week in which I can slip my neck from the collar.

S. Do so when you can, and you will find a hearty welcome. May we meet at this season many years yet to come! I watch you at your sport, and *hope* at every cast, when my strength fails and my sight grows dim; and if at length I should be

unable to accompany you to the water-side, I will look for your return at night-fall, and hear you recount your success.

J. May that time be yet far distant !

S. But it *must* come at last. When it does, let me be prepared. Thank God, I can contemplate the approach of that state serenely. Even should sight be obscured, I shall yet look forward to the approach of Spring, and be awakened by the matin song of the swallow on my chimney, and hear

———— the yellow banded bees
Through half-opened lattices
Coming in the scented breeze.

Should hearing also fail, I can still feel the gales of Spring, while the glorious sun will not disdain to shine upon my grey hairs. But should this, too, be denied me, I will not repine; for, to use the words of one whose works you must have read—"to be true and speak my soul, when I survey the occurrences of my life, and call into account

the finger of God, I can perceive nothing but an abyss and mass of mercies, either in general to mankind, or in particular to myself."

Pray, therefore, for me, my friend, that my senility may not be altogether a dreary void ; that some of my faculties may to the last be left me. Come, then, each Spring, and see the old man ; lead him to the spot he loved best when sight was not denied him ; and there, while you are engaged in the sport he once loved so much, let him sit and murmur with the poet:—

" Thank God for *memory* ! This is the green dell ;—

I hear the rill with music's ripples flowing ;
The scents of flowers recall my childhood well ;

I feel the sun of new-born summer glowing,
And, in my spirit's view I see the stream,
And the bright fish that through the water gleam.

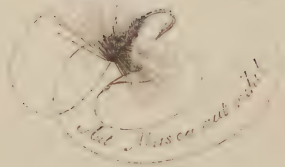
" Thank God for *music* ! for the pleasant voices

Of boughs and winds and waters as they meet ;
For every bird that in the wood rejoices ;

For every note in Nature's concert sweet ;—
To me the lark's clear carolling on high
Reveals the whole wide, blue, bright summer's sky.

“ Thank God for *hope* ! that after life’s short night,
Cheered by fair dreams and memories, I shall rise
To fields with never-failing verdure bright ;
Unfailing fountains, pure, unclouded skies ;
And see the world which will not pass away,
In the full sunshine of perpetual day ! ”

[*Exeunt from the churchyard.*



NOTES.

NOTES.

Page 38.

Devices of Leaders and Captains in the Civil Wars.— One Roundhead Captain bore for his device a rope depending from a gallows, and the motto "*Win and wear it!*" Withers, the poet, displayed a sword and a pen, with "*Pro Rege et Grege.*" Captain Tyrrell, a Buckinghamshire gentleman, figured an armed horseman, riding at full speed into a great fire, and the motto "*Sans craindre.*" See a long list of similar conceits in the Supplement to "*The Art of making Devices.*" London. 4to. 1665.

Page 39.

The May-fly.— Though called the May-fly, every fly-fisher knows that this insect rarely rises in this country till June. In the middle of the latter month it is often seen still at the bottom of streams in the larva state; its appearance greatly depends upon the season. The "*Dun,*" a May-fly in miniature, seems more

hardy, and may now and then be observed, on a *very fine day*, as early as the month of March. Their counterfeits, of different tints, may be had, most beautifully made, of many of the London tackle-makers.

Page 79.

Linchards, i. e., precipitous slips of land on the hill side, left untouched by the plough. Anglo-Saxon, *Hline*, a bank or mound, and *Sceapð*, a piece or portion. The word *Hline* occurs repeatedly in A. S. Charters, in which the boundaries of the grant are set out; thus : þonon up ofer ðeop hline. of þam hline to þa' beorze to Ælfrædes landscape : i. e., thence up over the *deerlinch*; from the *linch* to the hill at Alfred's share of land, &c.

Page 84.

The Pike.—"Dr. Warwick, a visitor, detailed some remarkable instances of instinct, or of intelligence, in animals, which had come under his personal observation.

"When he resided at Dunham, the seat of the Earl of Stamford and Warrington, he was walking one evening in the park, and came to a pond, where fish intended for the table were temporarily kept. He took particular notice of a fine pike, of about six pounds weight, which, when it observed him, darted hastily away. In so doing, it struck its head against a tenterhook in a post (of which there were several in the pond, placed to

prevent poaching), and as it afterwards appeared, fractured its skull, and turned the optic nerve on one side. The agony evinced by the animal appeared most horrible. It rushed to the bottom, and, boring its head into the mud, whirled itself round with such velocity that it was almost lost to the sight for a short interval. It then plunged about the pond, and at length threw itself completely out of the water on the bank. He (the Doctor) went and examined it, and found that a very small portion of the brain was protruding from the fracture in the skull. He carefully replaced this, and, with a small silver tooth-pick, raised the indented portion of the skull. The fish remained still for a short time, and he then put it into the pond again. It appeared at first a good deal relieved, but in a few minutes it again darted and plunged about until it threw itself out of the water a second time. A second time Dr. Warwick did what he could to relieve it, and again put it into the water. It continued for several times to throw itself out of the pond; and, with the assistance of the keeper, the doctor at length made a kind of pillow for the fish, which was then left in the pond to its fate. Upon making his appearance at the pond on the following morning, the pike came towards him to the edge of the pond, and actually laid its head upon his foot. The doctor thought this very extraordinary, but he examined the fish's skull, and found it going on all right. He then walked backwards and forwards along the edge of the pond for some time, and the fish continued to swim up and down, turning when-

ever he turned ; but being blind on the wounded side of its skull, it always appeared agitated when it had that side towards the bank as it could not then see its benefactor. On the next day he took some young friends down to see the fish, which came to him as usual ; and at length he actually taught the pike to come to him at his whistle and feed out of his hands. With other persons it continued as shy as fish usually are. He (Dr. Warwick) thought this a most remarkable instance of gratitude in a fish for a benefit received ; and, as it always came at his whistle, it proved also, what he had previously, with other naturalists, disbelieved, that fishes are sensible to sound.”—*Proceedings of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Liverpool, No. IV.*, p. 76.—We give this extraordinary account as we found it, merely remarking that if the pike tribe is generally endowed with such wonderful sagacity, the knowledge of the fact would go far to banish the cruel description of angling practised in the taking of this fish. It certainly does not appear that the pike preys on anything in sheer wantonness, like the Salmonidæ, and other fish, which often overwhelm and play with floating insects in sport. As to the *hearing* of fishes, as maintained by Dr. Warwick, we doubt the fact, and would refer the reader to a chapter on this subject in Mr. Ronalds’s beautiful book, “*The Fly-fisher’s Entomology* ;” nevertheless, we bear constantly in mind the maxim of Christopher North, that when near the river-side it is not advisable “to blow your nose like a bagman, nor tramp up and down the bank

like a paving-machine," fishes being, as every angler must have observed, very sensible of vibration.

Page 116.

Old Grumbleton.—There are several versions of this story extant, but the reader will doubtless prefer that we have given instead of the following :—

Owld Grumbler he did vow and zwear
By the lafe that grows on the tree,
That he could do mwore work in one day
Than his wife could do in dree.

Then Grumbler he a vresh bargain would make
That it should be zo now,
That he would be housewife at whoame,
And her zould gwo to plough.

Then Jane her a vresh bargain would make
That the hens zould not lay away,
And he zould reel the spinnin yearn
That her spun yesterday.

Then Jane her tuk the whip in hand,
And away wi' Jack to plough,
And Grumbler tuk the milkin pail,
And away to milk th' owld cow.

Owld Colley hunched, and owld Colley vlinched,
And Colley bleowed drough her nose,
And owld Colley kicked owld Grumbler's zhins
Till the blood rund out ov' his zhoes.

The Grumbler zet the milkin pail down,
And turned hiz zelf about ;
And there stood th' owld zow in the butter churm,
Wi' her two vore vit and sznout.

Then Grumbler tuk th' vire zhovel,
And zware he 'd pay her hire ;
The owld zow rund 'tween Grumbler's legs,
And drowed un into th' vire.

Then Grumbler he a grumblin lay,
While the hens did lay away ;
And he vorgot to reel the yearn
As Jane spun yesterday.

Then Grumbler he a grumblin lay,
Till Jane coomed whoame vrom plough ;
And there did stand the milkin pail,
And likewise the owld zow.

Then Grumbler he a vresh bargain 'ould make,
That it should be zo now,
That Jane zould be housewife at whoame,
And he would gwo to plough.

A Wiltshire friend says that he has heard in his boyhood a different version from this, of which he remembers but the following lines :—

“Mine’s a bad bargain,” quoth Grumble,
As the day did pass away ;
“I hav’n’t a made my butter and cheese,
Nar gied the pegs their whey !”

Page 163.

The Elder Tree.—“This tree was held in great veneration by our forefathers,” says Grimm ; “when they had occasion to lop it they repeated this prayer : ‘Frau Ellhorn gib mir was von deinem holz, dan will ich dir von meinem auch was geben wann es wächst im walde.’—*Lady Elder, give me some of thy wood, then will I also give thee some of mine, when it grows in the forest.* This was generally repeated with head uncovered, and with folded hands.” “In Hildesheim, when any one dies, the gravedigger goes in silence to an elder-tree, and cuts a wand to measure the corpse by ; the man who takes it to the grave does the like, and holds this wand instead of the usual whip.” “Elder planted before the stall-door preserves the cattle from magic.”—Grimm, *Deut. Myth.* p. 375, and *Anhang*, p. ciii.—See the *Glossary to the Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*, edited by Benjamin Thorpe, *voce* Eller. London. 1840.

Page 164.

Dutch Sauce for Salmon and all Freshwater Fish.—
Ingredients: 2 yolks of eggs, a quarter of a pint of cream, $2\frac{1}{2}$ table-spoonsful of *elder vinegar*; half a table-spoonful of anchovy, $1\frac{1}{2}$ ounce of butter; one *Cayenne* spoonful of Cayenne pepper. Make good melted butter (potato flour is best), whip the yolk and cream well and add them to it, and let it thicken; then add the condiments and *take care it does not boil after, or it will curdle*. The best way is to make an extempore *bain marie* by putting the saucepan into a larger one of boiling water, which keeps the right heat, and will neither prevent the thickening, nor curdle it with the acid. The consistency, colour, and appearance should be that of rich boiled custard.

The End.

LONDON:

Printed by S. & J. BENTLEY and HENRY FLET,
Dancer House, Shoe Lane.



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